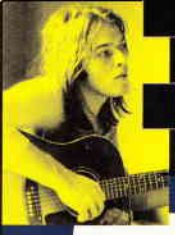

EXCLUSIVE **PINK FLOYD** LESSON!
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GUITAR WORLD Acoustic

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5 SONGS TRANSCRIBED!

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"You're Beautiful"

THE ROLLING STONES
"Love In Vain"

THE KINKS
"Lola"

MERLE HAGGARD
"Okie From Muskogee"

ACOUSTIC ARRANGEMENT!
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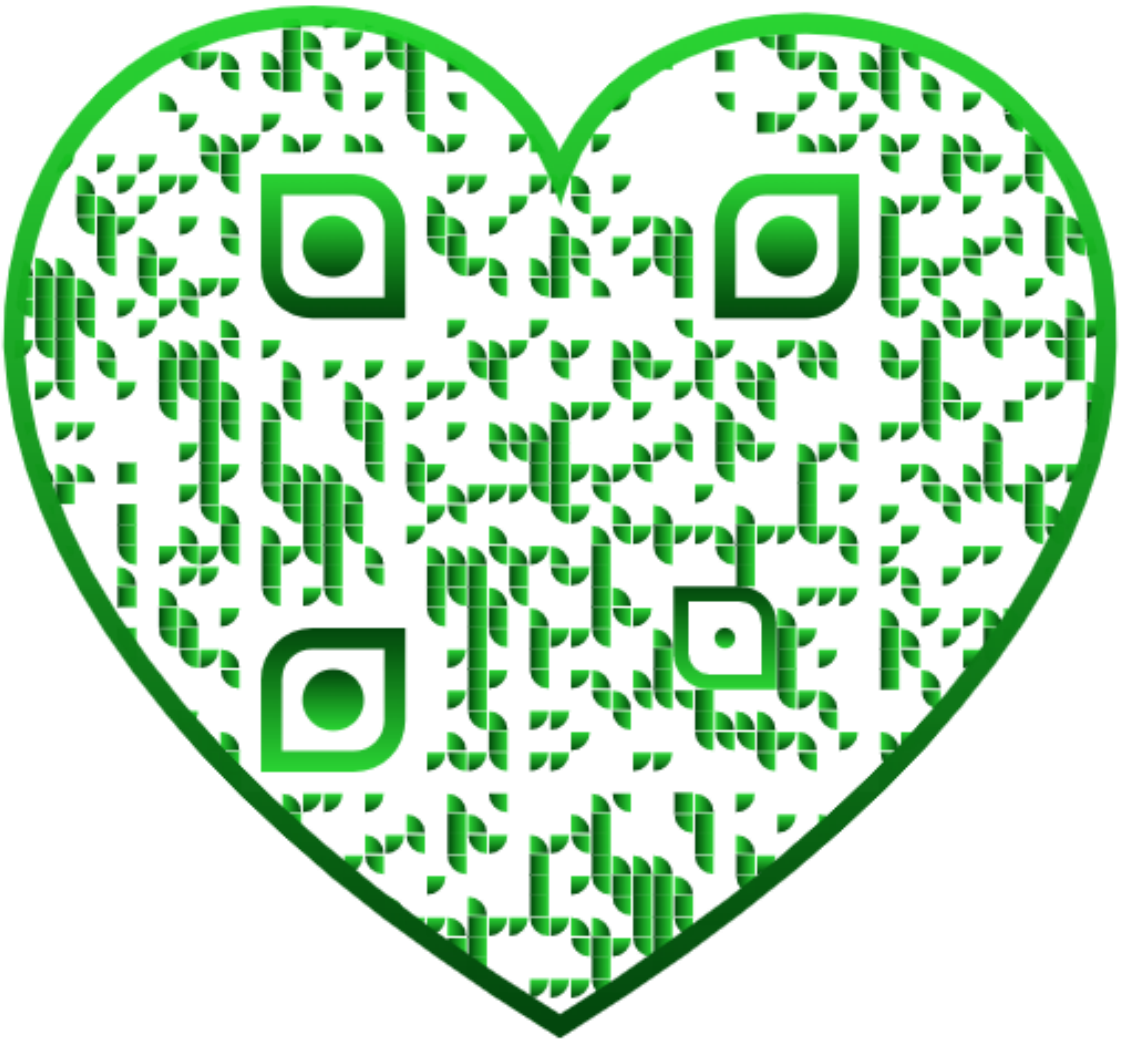

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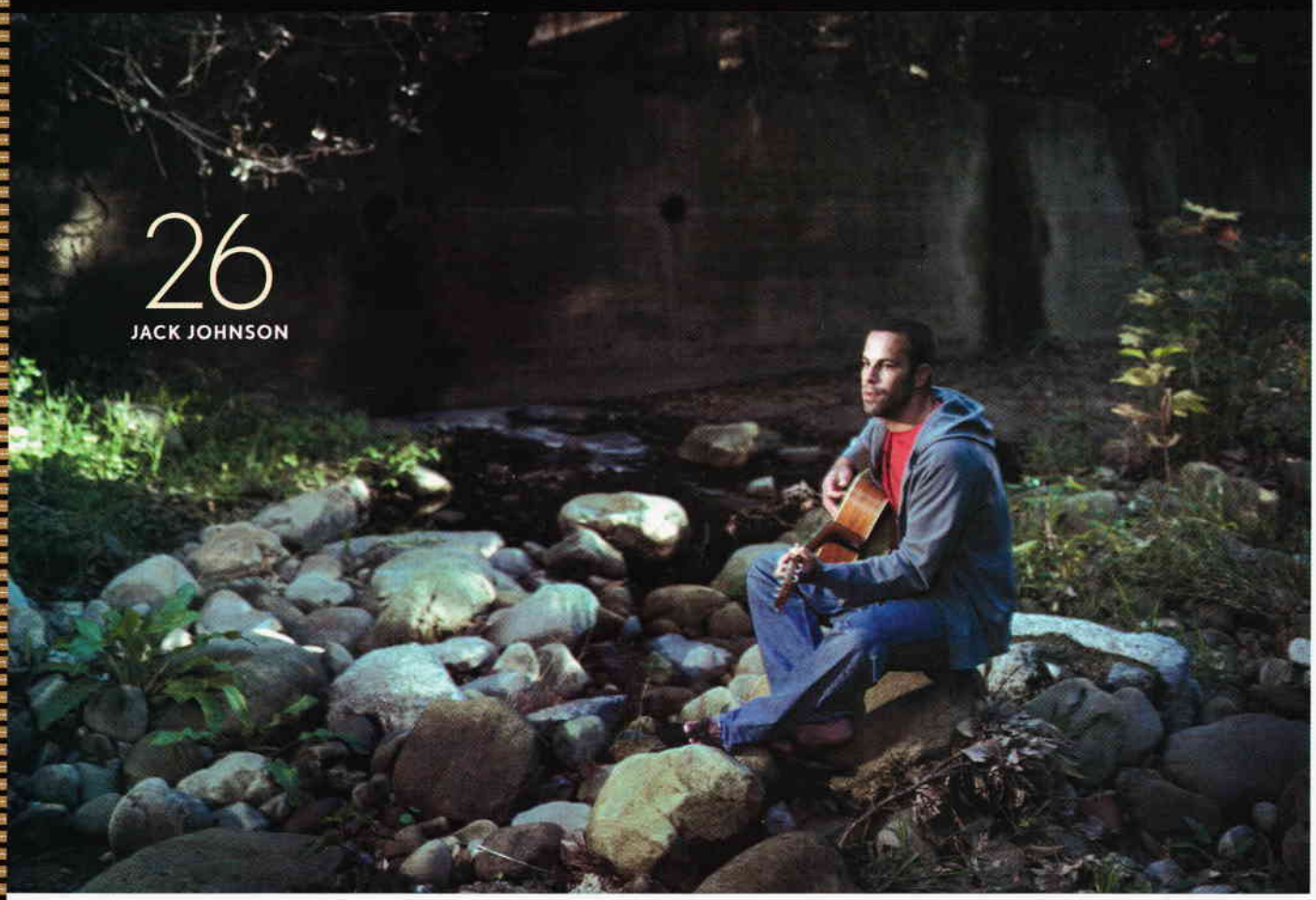

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Cover Photograph by NEIL ZLOZOWER

LETTERS

THE SURE THING

I was at the Barnes & Noble book shop in my neighborhood when I came across your tribute issue to Johnny Cash [*GWA* March 2006], with its stunning cover image of him posed like Lincoln within the silhouette of an acoustic guitar. I never bought your magazine before, but that picture was so arresting that I gambled the six bucks and took it home. It proved to be a gamble well worth taking. Brian Mansfield's Cash story was terrific, and more personal than most I'd read since Johnny's death. I think you found yourself a subscriber.

—Fred Juden, via email

HE'S A BIG SHOT

Loved the Billy Joel lesson. I never thought of his music as guitar-oriented before—shows what I know! My friends make fun of me for liking Billy so much, but I think that with the passage of time he will come to be regarded as one of the truly great songwriters of the 20th century.

—Mike Duncan, Pittsburgh, PA

BOBBY'S BOYS

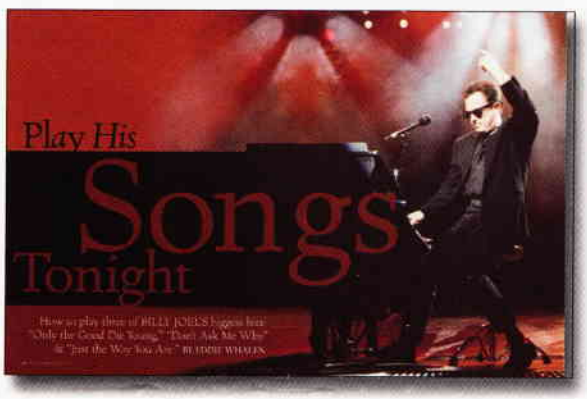
I really liked your Bob Dylan issue [*GWA* February 2006]. It was very interesting to read what he had to say about his music, and it was even cooler to read what he had to say about his influences. Keep up the good work.

—Charles Devine, Sterling, VA

* * *

I look forward to seeing your magazine on the store shelf every month. The tabs are great, and you have made me a guitar addict. I wanted to write and comment on the Bob Dylan issue: Everyone I've ever talked to says, "He can't sing." That irks me! Bob is great! Who cares, the dude can carry a note, which is all that matters, his music is awesome and his storytelling skills are superb! So I say in his honor, "Long live the Dylan!"

—Patrick Best, Hogdenville, KY



STILLS STANDS OUT

Loved the article on Mr. Dylan, but it was the story on Stephen Stills that really made the issue. I'm glad that he's back, and I would love to get my hands on the chords and tuning for "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes." Please include this in some future issue!

—Louie Mancuso, Mesa, AZ

CRYIN' SHANE

Thank you for including Reverend Shane in your "On The Rise" column. I, like the Rev., hail from Fresno, and I have seen him play many times. His music and lyrics are excellent, and he has a great voice. I highly recommend his album, *Interstate 5*, and suggest that anyone who has the opportunity go see him play.

—Bob White, via email

ACOUSTIC ROCK THERAPY

After six years of subscribing to *Guitar World Acoustic*, it's safe to say that without you and my 10-year-old Seagull six-string, I'd be in a mental ward banging my head against the wall.

—Scott Marshutz, Laguna Niguel, CA

GUITAR WORLD Acoustic

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Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR).
ISSN 1045-6295

NON-EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN **Roger Parry**
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www.futureplc.com

REPRINTS For reprints, contact Reprint Management Services, 717.399.1900 ext. 100

EUREKA!

MANY YEARS HAVE passed since the day my older brother, King of the Brooklyn Music Missionaries, sat me down and forced me to listen to Robert Johnson. A moment or two passed before I pronounced my verdict: "Noise! This sounds like noise!"

All right, so I wasn't the new incarnation of John Hammond. But it wasn't long before I, like about a billion other people, became obsessed with Johnson. I took to listening to his songs every night on my little Panasonic RQ209DAS cassette tape recorder—the same one I'd used years earlier to master the segment of the Old Testament I had to read in synagogue for my bar mitzvah.

These days, I still get the same old red-hot, low-down shakin' chill when I hear Johnson's tremulous slide playing on "Come On in My Kitchen," his machine-gun string snapping on "Walking Blues," or the unutterably desolate intro to "Hell Hound on My Trail."

And so I was thrilled by the news, first reported in late January, that a San Diego blues fanatic/researcher named Tom Jacobson had discovered evidence that incontrovertibly confirmed the Dallas, Texas, site of the second of Johnson's total of two recording sessions: a small art-deco building that once housed Brunswick/Vocalion, the now long-defunct label for whom Robert cut his total output of 29 songs back in the late Thirties.

The confirmation was found in a letter written by Don Law, who produced Johnson, in which he explicitly noted that the bluesman had recorded 13 songs—including "Hell Hound on My Trail"—on the weekend of June 19-20, 1937, in an improvised studio at the former Brunswick building, still standing today at 508 Park Ave. in Dallas. (Johnson recorded the other 16 songs in November 1936, at the Gunther Hotel in San Antonio.)

The letter also featured other bits of information about Johnson, including the story that he'd asked Law for the five cents he needed—"I lacks a nickel"—to procure the services of a prostitute (she charged 50 cents), and that he often played with his back to audiences to prevent others from stealing his arrangements.

While Jacobson hadn't discovered the Holy Grail, or even the staff of Moses, the news of his find cheered me—and, no doubt, all those other Johnson fans hungry for information about the great one—enormously.

So, in honor of Mr. Jacobson, we are proud to include a transcription of the Rolling Stones' 1969 version of Johnson's "Love In Vain," a track that confirmed the greatness of both the composer and the British band that so avidly followed in his footsteps.

—Harold Steinblatt

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August 11, 2005

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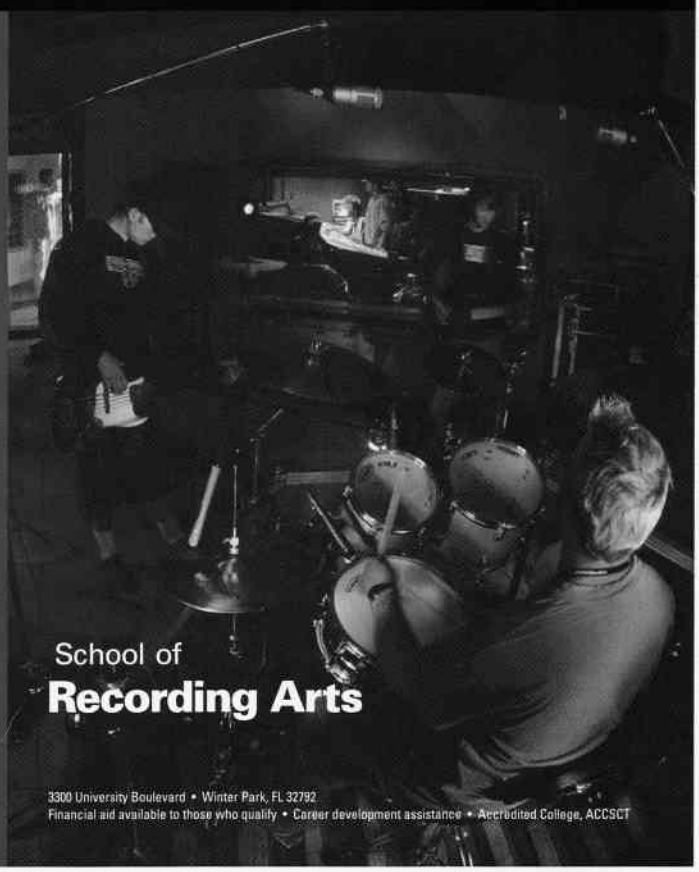

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FIRST STRINGERS

Calexico GARDEN PARTY

OVER THE PAST decade, Tucson, Arizona's Calexico have established themselves as one of the foremost Southwestern indie acts around, notable for an incredibly eclectic sound that features elements of everything from Portuguese fado and Mexican mariachi to American country, surf rock and Fifties jazz. But on their latest album, *Garden Ruin* (Quarterstick/Touch and Go), the band strips down almost to their unplugged underwear to create a folk-based record built around singer Joey Burns's acoustic guitar and vocals.

GUITARS 1961 Epiphone Texan, 1980's Martin Shenandoah dreadnought, 1990's Manuel Rodriguez nylon-string, 1960's Stella tenor, 1980's Crown banjo, 1930's Maxitone banjo ukulele
AMPS Fender Blues DeVille 212, Fender Pro Junior
STRINGS D'Addario

"We've always been perceived as a Southwestern band, and sometimes it's good to look at those perceptions and challenge them," says Burns. "Calexico actually started out with a very minimalist approach, but as we grew, we added more instruments and kept finding new ways to utilize them. This time, we wanted to step back and focus on songs and stories."

Calexico's return to their roots can be traced back to *In the Reins*, the 2005 album they recorded with Iron & Wine, and a stint opening for Wilco. Burns's strumming on *Garden Ruin* tracks like "Bisbee Blue" and "Letter to Bowie Knife" is reminiscent of Jeff Tweedy's playing on Wilco's early work, while "Yours and Mine" and "Smash" have the quiet intimacy of Iron & Wine's best songs.

"Touring the U.S. with Iron & Wine and Wilco really gave us a different perspective on our music," says Burns. "In Europe, it's widely accepted to meld together a lot of cultures, but here, we'd play a *cumbia* and it would completely fall flat. So we began focusing more on straight-ahead songs with recognizable beats."

Like much of Tweedy's work with Wilco, the songs on *Garden Ruin* feature melancholy lyrics hidden inside upbeat, ringing melodies. The album finds Burns venting on issues ranging from urban sprawl to the environment to the war in Iraq.

"I grew up listening to the music of the Vietnam War era, and I've always been a huge fan of people like Bob Dylan and Townes Van Zandt," he says. "With things being so politically extreme today, I feel very connected to what they were feeling back then. So I guess it's fitting for the times to make an album that goes back to that sound."

—Hal Bienstock

Calexico singer and guitarist Joey Burns

Photograph by PETER BESTE

Kris Kristofferson

GIVE HIM LIBERTY

"FREEDOM'S JUST another word for nothin' left to lose." More than 35 years have passed since that phrase, from the chorus of "Me and Bobby McGee," made Kris Kristofferson a household name. Freedom—political, artistic and personal—remains "Topic A" for Kristofferson to this day, as is evident from the songs on his new acoustic album, *This Old Road* (New West).

"A songwriter friend once told me if I took the devils, shadows and freedom out of my songs they'd be empty," Kristofferson says with a laugh. "But the struggle for freedom of expression and freedom to be the person you want to be extends out to concern for freedom for other people." He sees the current war in Iraq, the subject of "In the News," one of the most powerful songs on the new album, in these terms. "I think we've got a responsibility as the only superpower in the world not to impinge on other people's freedom."

While making political statements is nothing new for Kristofferson, a man who in 1990 released an album called *Third World Warrior*, making a solo acoustic record is. Except for some minimal overdubbing on a couple of tracks, *This Old Road* features nothing but his voice, guitar and harmonica.

"It's the way I've been working on the road these days," Kris explains. "A year or so ago, I was making a film in Scotland and was offered some gigs in Dublin. I didn't have time to mobilize my band, so I did it by myself. It was a little scary at first, not being able to hide behind anybody. But it worked well and put an interesting focus on the songs." Producer Don Was agreed, and when he suggested that Kristofferson try the same approach in the studio, the singer-songwriter was amenable.

As a solo artist, both on tour and in the studio for the new album, Kristofferson relies on "a big Martin and a big Gibson." While he acknowledges his deficiencies as an instrumentalist—"I'll never be considered a guitarist"—he does respect his basic strumming and fingerstyle work. "I play well enough to back myself up. It's honest, which I'd also say about this record." —*Isaiah Trost*

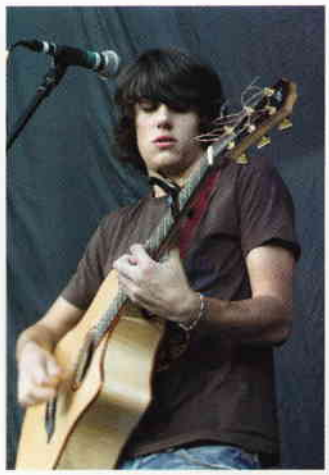
BRUCE SPRINGS A SURPRISE

On January 14, the 2006 New York Guitar Festival kicked off its annual run of concerts with a performance that set the bar high for the rest of the series. "The Nebraska Project," held at the World Financial Center's Winter Garden in lower Manhattan, featured a variety of rock, country, blues and folk artists offering inventive, often highly idiosyncratic takes on the 10 songs from *Nebraska*, Bruce Springsteen's stark, acoustic guitar-based 1982 masterpiece, as well as several other tunes by the Boss.

In an evening filled with unexpected delights—Harry Manx accompanying his performance of "Johnny 99" on a 20-string Indian Mohan Veena, Dan Zanes's and Vernon Reid's collaboration on "State Trooper"—none was more thrilling than the moment Springsteen himself, acoustic guitar in hand, strode onstage to lead a number of the artists in a spirited, if ragged, version of Woody Guthrie's "Oklahoma Hills." It was a fitting end to an exciting show—

Springsteen has long acknowledged Guthrie's influence on *Nebraska*—and a fantastic beginning to the festival.

—*Richard Bienstock*



OH, BOY!

TEDDY GEIGER

TEDDY GEIGER'S enthusiastic strumming provides an ideal delivery vehicle for the parcels of pop he doles out on his Columbia debut, *Underage Thinking*. A polished stylist whose music recalls the works of such tunesmiths as John Mayer and the young Dave Matthews, the guitarist writes lyrics that are sometimes powerfully intimate, while at other times raucously joyous.

Just 19 years old, Geiger began composing songs at age five, developing his skills on the piano and honing them on an acoustic guitar given to him three years later by his grandfather. By the time he reached his teens, the Rochester, New York, native was hitting local clubs in Buffalo, where he attracted a devoted group of fans known as "Ted Heads." Geiger got his big break after his mother signed him up to audition for the VH1 series *In Search of the New Partridge Family*. While he didn't make the show's final cut, the experience led to his meeting producer Billy Mann who, impressed with Geiger's performance, helped him land a recording contract with Columbia.

"To tell you the truth, I never wanted to win a part on the show—I thought it was kind of cheesy," says Geiger, who currently can be seen on the network television series *Love Monkey*. "I wanted to get as far as I could without actually getting the gig."

He may be young, but Geiger appears to be well prepared for the pressures he will encounter as a highly touted "fresh new face on the music scene." "People have told me that life will get a lot crazier, but I honestly haven't experienced it," he says. "It might, but I really don't think I'm important enough yet to get that much attention."

—*Morrison White*

MARY ELLEN MARK (KRISTOFERSON), SCOTT D. SMITH / RETNA LTD. (TEDDY GEIGER)

ON THE RISE
BY BRAD ANGLE

JOSEPHINE FOSTER

ALBUM ***A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing*** **(Locust)**
HOMETOWN **"A cottage 10 miles from Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado"**
SOUND **Foster's psychedelic music and delicate acoustic playing support her utterly transfixing soprano: think Grace Slick meets Joan Baez, in space.**

HISTORY **An opera-school dropout, Josephine played ukulele until she discovered the wider tonal palate of a nylon-string acoustic. *A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing* features her contemporary reworkings of 19th century German parlor songs.**
GEAR **1970's Harmony guitar**
WEBSITE **100songsising.com**
QUOTE **"I took these songs down from the ivory tower and gave them my own simple transcriptions. These are mystical, spiritual songs and I wanted to levitate them in a new way."**

AVETT BROTHERS

ALBUM ***Four Thieves Gone: The Robbinsville Sessions*** **(Ramseur)**
HOMETOWN **Concord, North Carolina**
SOUND **Seth Avett lays the foundation for the group's melodic, foot-stomping outlaw folk with his confident flat-picking and creative chord voicings.**

HISTORY **Seth and his brother, banjoist Scott, ditched their hard-rock band when they realized that toting acoustics was a lot easier on the back than hauling half stacks. The brothers and standup bassist Bob Crawford recorded *Four Thieves Gone* in a house in the mountains of Robbinsville, North Carolina.**
GEAR **1976 and 1991 Martin D-35's, D'Addario heavy strings**
WEBSITE **theavettbrothers.com**
QUOTE **"We consider ourselves primarily songwriters," says Seth. "While we like to write complex leads and play them well, they're always secondary to the song."**

Are you *this* close to making it? If so, send a CD, photo and bio to: Brad Angle, c/o *Guitar World Acoustic*, 149 5th Ave., 9th Floor, New York, NY 10010

KT Tunstall

PATIENCE IS HER VIRTUE

YOU EXPERIENCE a lot of fear when making your first album," says singer-songwriter KT Tunstall. "Especially if you've been an independent musician for years and years and then you sign with a major label. You wonder if you've sold your soul."

Not surprisingly, the queasiness experienced by the tenacious Scottish guitarist when Virgin Records offered her a contract disappeared when she realized the deal would help expose her music to a *very* large audience. And Tunstall's solid debut, *Eye to the Telescope*, a confident collection of blues-influenced numbers ("Black Horse and the Cherry Tree"), soulful ballads ("Other Side of the World") and dreamy acoustic pop ("Under the Weather"), is hardly an artist with her head buried in the sand.

Though she studied piano and flute growing up in St. Andrews, Scotland, Tunstall, the daughter of a physicist, never imagined a career in music for herself. "While other kids were watching MTV," she recalls, "I played games with liquid nitrogen and Van der Graaf generators."

But things began changing for her when, at 16, she bought an acoustic guitar and a chord book; one year later, while attending a Connecticut boarding school, she discovered the songs of Joni Mitchell, Tom Waits and Lou Reed—and she hasn't been the same since. Reed, in particular, figured heavily in her transformation.

"The Velvet Underground's music wasn't perfect, in tune or even in time," she says. "But it definitely made me feel something profound."

Tunstall returned to St. Andrews and became a folk junkie, becoming a fixture on the British pub scene for a decade while developing her Dido-meets–Beth Orton vocal style and aggressive, strum-heavy acoustic playing. "I wore a hole above my guitar's soundhole," she says with pride.

Though it took some time, Tunstall's hard work ultimately paid off in a big way, and today, thanks to the success of *Eye to the Telescope*, she's selling out venues on both sides of the Atlantic. While KT's acoustic playing on the album is augmented by keyboards, orchestral strings and electric guitar, the singer says she has not strayed from her folk roots: "I always write on an acoustic. You've got to be able to sit and play what you're writing on one instrument. If you can't do that," she says, "I'm not sure it's really a song." —*Brad Angle*

GUITARS Gibson Dove
STRINGS D'Addario medium gauge
EFFECTS Akai Professional E2 Headrush

PEROU (KT TUNSTALL); CRACKERFARM.COM (AVETT BROS.)

Willy Mason

THE HUMAN TOUCH

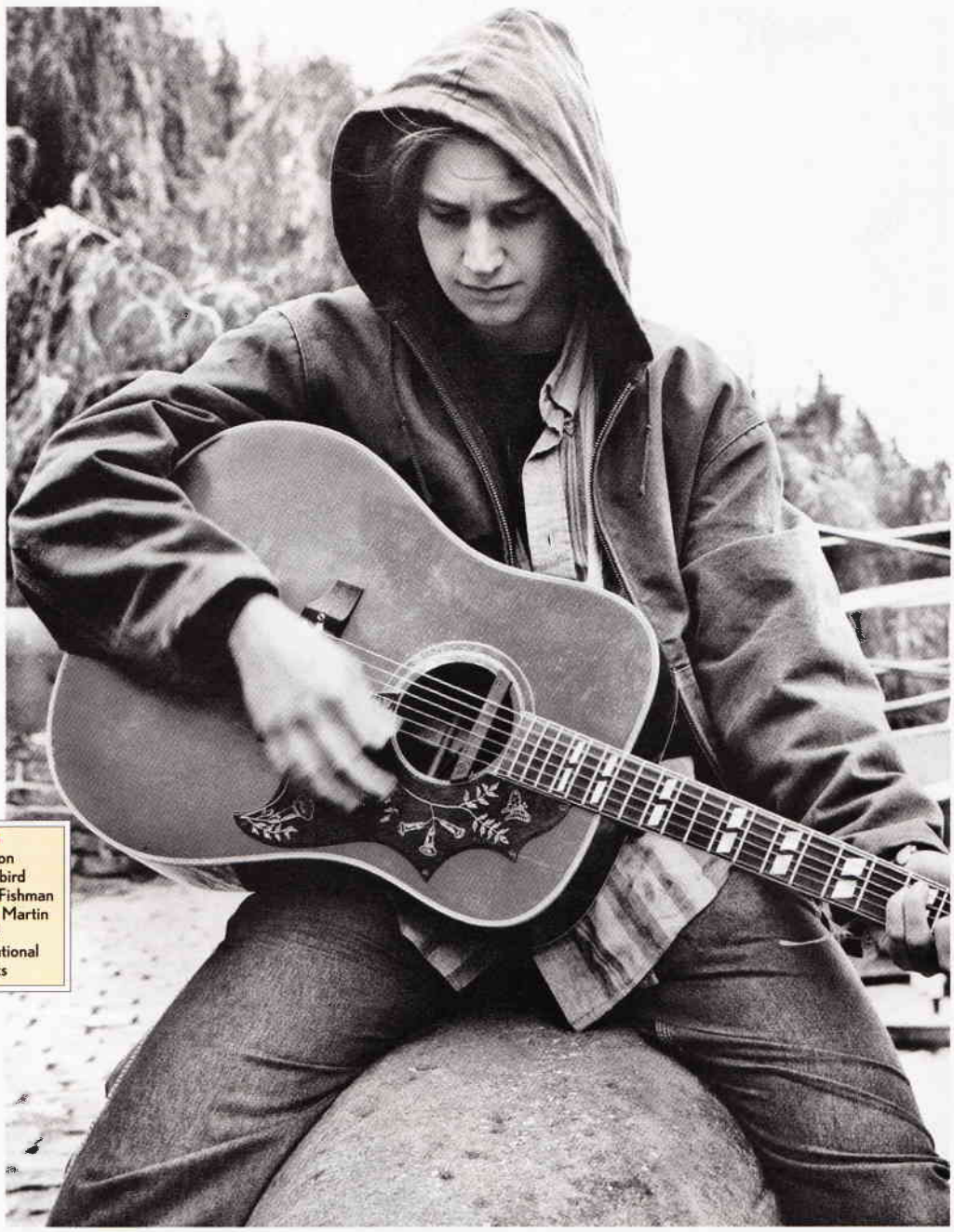
HE'S ON THE CUSP of stardom in Great Britain, where his debut disc, *Where the Humans Eat*, a collection of folk/blues tunes laced with punk rock attitude, has sold 100 thousand copies since its original release last year. Now, with the stateside reissue of the album by Astralwerks and a 30-stop tour opening for Beth Orton, 21-year-old Willy Mason hopes to make a splash on this side of the Atlantic.

So how did the Massachusetts native come to be so big in England? Here are the unadorned facts: Conor Oberst, better known as Bright Eyes, heard one of Mason's tunes a couple of years ago and was so impressed that he signed him to his Team Love label. After successful appearances in support of My Morning Jacket, Rosanne Cash and other major artists, Mason recorded *Where the Humans Eat*, which didn't exactly set the charts on fire in the U.S. at the time. He then played the 2004 South by Southwest Festival in Austin, where "a BBC One DJ saw me perform and started playing my song 'Oxygen' in England," says Mason. "I decided I should get over there right away and see what I could make of it, and from there things just got bigger and bigger."

Mason says his music is very much the product of the education he received growing up in a small town on Martha's Vineyard. His parents, both folk musicians, not only taught him how to fingerpick but gave him the equivalent of a lifelong seminar on classic blues and country music. "My own sound," he says, "is a kind of bridge between my mother's John Lee Hooker and my father's Hank Williams."

Mason was not always a chip off the old folk block. The first band he idolized, he says, was Nirvana, and he actually initially gravitated to the electric guitar. But while he loved grunge and punk rock, something else mattered even more to Mason: the communal power of music. "I always saw playing as a way of bringing people together," he says. "And when my band's music got so loud that certain friends of mine couldn't stand to be around it, I thought, 'Something's wrong here,' and I picked up the acoustic." —*Celine Keating*

GUITARS 1971 Gibson Hummingbird
PICKUP: Fishman
STRINGS Martin extra light
PICKS National fingerpicks



ANTHONY PIDGEON / RETNA LTD. (LIVE)

Record Reviews

Ray Davies
Other People's Lives
V2

»»"Welcome to jolly old England," Ray Davies proclaims in "Stand Up Comic," one of the songs on *Other People's Lives*, his first solo album of new material since the soundtrack to his 1985 film, "Return to Waterloo." He sounds like a barker at a rundown theme park—and at times he sounds a little desperate. The first couple of tracks rely on a self-conscious use of earthy English vernacular—a gleefully enunciated "arse" here, a "bloody well will" there—to add flavor to some otherwise unremarkable grungy rock that only hints at his hard-riffing glory days with the Kinks.

Ultimately, though, the English *shtick* serves Davies well on an album that just about scrapes together enough good songs—and one great one—to maintain his reputation as one of the finest writers of English pop.

Davies, who shares guitar duties with Mark Jones and Steve Bolton, creates a nicely layered wall of acoustic and electric sounds throughout the album, often beginning a song with a nimbly picked solo acoustic part before the electric barrage kicks in. Ray's prominent organ adds to the swirling brew. His production is more about texture and atmosphere than flashy solos, however, and instrumental breaks are kept brief and functional. The focus is always on the lyrics, and, by the third track, it's clear Davies can still pen an evocative word picture.

The mellow "Next Door Neighbour," a disarming study in Sixties and Seventies nostalgia both in style and content, is a mix of mild social comment and innocent whimsy reminiscent of Kinks songs like "A Well Respected Man" and "Dedicated Follower of Fashion." The even more whimsical "Is There Life After Breakfast" is almost Monty Pythonesque in its treatment of that famous British panacea, a nice cup of tea.

Davies's guided tour of theme-park Britain isn't all cozy memories, however. The suitably frenetic novelty tune "Stand Up Comic" describes the rise of *yob*, or low-life, culture in the Kingdom with the deadly surprise of a randomly hurled bottle at an English soccer match, while "The Tourist," the album's best track, finds Davies slipping effortlessly into the persona of a new breed of Englishman abroad—the plastic-flashing, knuckle-dragging *Chav* (the bling and soccer shirt-wearing white trash of Britain's inner cities). His sneering, flattened-vowel pronunciation of "living la vida loca" is a gem of character acting, while the track's slow, sleazy vibe, interrupted by flashes of angry, thrashy electric guitar, perfectly captures the uneasy mix of aimlessness and latent violence that defines this particular strata of English society.

Though the album as a whole is a patchy affair, longtime Kinks fans will certainly find plenty to enjoy here. Even those not of this large tribe are encouraged to check out the sometimes still potent observations of a man who, 40 years ago, helped make London the city the world swung around. ***—Douglas McPherson***

Isobel Campbell & Mark Lanegan

Ballad of the Broken Seas

V2

>> Talk about opposite ends of the rock spectrum: Campbell got her start making retro soft-pop with Belle & Sebastian, while Lanegan fronted Seattle grungers Screaming Trees. Her voice is high and wispy, his is low and craggy. But this strange pairing works like a dream, revealing an alluring (and previously unsuspected) darkness in Campbell's writing and further demonstrating Lanegan's longstanding debt to classic American folk and country—most obviously on a splendid cover of Hank Williams's "Ramblin' Man." Guitarist Jim McCulloch, formerly of British cult faves the Soup Dragons, contributes strong-yet-subtle acoustic playing throughout; he also penned the standout, string-laced instrumental "It's Hard to Kill a Bad Thing." ***—Mac Randall***

Jesse Harris

Mineral

SECRET SUN RECORDINGS

>> Jesse Harris is best known for his work with Norah Jones, with whom he collaborated on her Grammy-winning 2002 debut, *Come Away with Me*. But Harris has long been an established artist in his own right, as the leader of the laidback roots-rock band the Ferdinandos. The singer-songwriter's new album, *Mineral*, finds him truly going it alone: not only is it his first effort not co-credited to the Ferdinandos, it's also the first release on his own imprint, Secret Sun Recordings.

Harris's hushed vocal and gentle strumming and picking take center stage here, with additional instrumentation provided by drummer Kenny Wolleson and organist Larry Goldings (John Scofield, James Taylor). As he demonstrated in his work with Jones, Harris is a master at creating atmosphere, and *Mineral*'s overall vibe is almost hypnotically ambient. Throughout, Harris's inventive arrangements and accomplished acoustic playing, characterized by jazzy chord voicings and ringing arpeggios, are consistently pleasing, always interesting and full of subtle surprises. ***—Richard Bienstock***

Jules Shear

Dreams Don't Count

MAD DRAGON

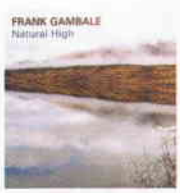
>> Sensitive, sad and analytical, veteran singer-songwriter Jules Shear keeps it fresh on his new release, *Dreams Don't Count*. Shear, best-known for writing the Cyndi Lauper hit "All Through the Night," takes a chamber music-like approach on *Dreams Don't Count*, shedding the rock rhythm section for viola, cello and accordion, with Jules and his gentle fingerpicking in the fore. Shear's unpretty and slightly nasal voice brings a little grit to an album loaded with intense and minutely-detailed relationship songs. While it is soft and sweet enough to work as background music, close listening reveals that *Dreams Don't Count* could serve as the perfect accompaniment to a post-breakup listening session. ***—Isaiah Trost***

Frank Gambale

Natural High

WOMBAT

>> This Aussie fusion master first became known for his fleet-fingered electric excursions with his own band and as a member of jazz outfits run by Chick Corea and Billy Cobham. Here he's unplugged but still fully charged, tearing through sweet, knotty solos on "We'll Remember December," his take on the standard "I'll Remember April," and drag racing unison lines with bassist Alain Caron on "D's Living Room," a Latin-flavored tribute to John McLaughlin. No acoustic wannabe, Gambale has a crisp tone and rippling technique would cause any Berklee student to salivate, yet his melodies are so strong that even the most chops-phobic listener will enjoy this collection. ***—Ted Drozdowski***



EDITOR'S PICK

Be Here to Love Me: A Film About Townes Van Zandt

Directed by Margaret Brown

PALM PICTURES

>>Young Austin-based filmmaker Margaret Brown has hit the mark with her first feature, *Be Here to Love Me*, a documentary that beautifully chronicles the life and music of the late Texas troubadour Townes Van Zandt (1944–1997). The legendarily self-destructive Van Zandt's 52 years were characterized by long stretches of mental illness and drug and alcohol addiction. At the same time, he wrote dozens of incredible songs—including "Pancho and Lefty," "If I Needed You," "Flyin' Shoes," "Waitin' Round to Die" and "To Live's to Fly"—earning comparisons to Bob Dylan and the respect and love of musical colleagues like Emmylou Harris, Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson, Steve Earle, Guy Clark and Lyle Lovett, all of whom appear in the film.

Brown traces Van Zandt's life from his birth to a socially prominent Fort Worth family to an early and long-lasting decline that included a glue-sniffing adolescence, electro-shock treatments in a mental hospital, three failed marriages, endless years on the road and death following surgery for a broken hip. Judiciously edited old home movies, interviews and performance footage reveal Van Zandt, for all his seemingly endless suffering, to have been extremely charismatic and a great performer, even when drunk. Still, portents of his early death hover over the entire film, which opens with a clip of Van Zandt declaring, "I don't envision a very long life for myself. I think my life will run out before my work does. I've designed it that way."

Be Here to Love Me proves that great art always finds a way not only of outliving the artist but diminishing his foibles. ***—Isaiah Trost***

JOHN CHIVESKI FINA LTD

LITTLE GUITARS

NEKO CASE *talks about her fine new album,* Fox Confessor Brings the Flood, *and her love for the four-string tenor guitar.*

By Mac Randall

WHEN NEKO CASE'S first album, *The Virginian*, appeared in 1997, it was obvious that an exciting new voice had arrived in popular music. But one question lingered: what *kind* of voice? Because Case sang with the spirit of Patsy Cline—albeit a heavily caffeinated Patsy—and tackled material first made famous by Ernest Tubb and Loretta Lynn, it was tempting to call her a country artist. But her choice of covers also included songs by Queen and British pop-noir cult figure Scott Walker, neither of whom is remotely associated with cowboy hats and barbecue. Clearly, while country occupied an important place in Case's heart, she had a roving eye, musically speaking.

This became even more apparent on her subsequent releases, *Furnace Room Lullaby* (2000) and the home-recorded *Canadian Amp* EP (2001), in which rock, blues and ghostly folk entered the Case mix. But it wasn't until 2002's *Blacklisted* that she managed to weave these stylistic strands into something that was truly hers: a dark, richly allusive, adult alternative music.

Case credits her arrival as a self-realized artist to two circumstances, one of which precipitated the other. Where previously she had collaborated with others to produce her original material, she was now writing songs by herself. And this was made possible by the fact that she'd finally gotten around to learning how to play guitar—acoustic tenor guitar, to be exact.

"I tried to play six-string for years," she says, "but my hands are really tiny and I never made any real progress. Then, when I was making *Furnace Room Lullaby*, I discovered a four-string tenor guitar at a friend's studio in Toronto. It was small enough that I could comfortably fit my hand around the neck. I went home and got one for myself, and I've been playing ever since. Though I eventually was able to learn six-string, I still mostly play tenor."

Born in Alexandria, Virginia, and raised in Tacoma, Washington, Case began her musical career as a drummer in local punk bands. After moving to Canada to attend art school, she became involved with a Vancouver-based music collective called the New Pornographers, which developed into one of today's most acclaimed indie-pop acts. Though Case is still active in the band—that's her feisty vocals on their latest release, last year's magnificent *Twin Cinema*—she focuses her songwriting energies on her solo work.

And that devotion is paying off: *Fox Confessor Brings the Flood* (Anti-), her new album, is her strongest effort to date, with the stirring melodies and unusual chord changes of tracks like "Margaret vs. Pauline" and "That Teenage Feeling" demonstrating her growth and sophistication as a composer. The album is also something of a coming-out party for her as an instrumentalist. Not only does she play acoustic tenor and six-string on a number of tracks—the

Case strums one of her beloved tenor acoustics.

HAYLEY MADDEN / REDFERNS / RETNA LTD

former, most notably, on her quirky reworking of the traditional "John Saw That Number"—but also electric tenor and conventional electric guitar. She even steps out on hammer dulcimer for the album's wistful closer, "The Needle Has Landed."

Guitar World Acoustic caught up with Case to discuss her evolution as a songwriter, her new album and, of course, her devotion to the four-string guitar that has had a profoundly positive effect on her music.

* * * * *

GUITAR WORLD ACOUSTIC So, how does someone go from drumming in punk bands to singing country music?

NEKO CASE Well, I'd always been into country music, but then there were some years when I decided it wasn't very cool, and when you're young and dumb, you want to look cool in front of your friends. So I got into punk. But punk rock was pretty much dead in the early Eighties. There were a handful of bands that were great, but for the most part it was macho and not smart. Nothing really represented what I was thinking or feeling, so I started listening to Patsy Cline again.

GWA It's interesting to see how radically your first album differs from *Fox Confessor Brings the Flood*—while your sound back then wasn't exactly traditional country, it certainly was far more in that vein than your new material.

CASE Basically, *The Virginian* was a covers record. It was just for fun—I never thought anybody would hear it. Most people wait until they know what they're doing before making a record, but I'm kind of an idiot, you know. I'm willing to do things that other people won't do, not because I'm some kind of a genius but because I'm stupid. I did learn a lot of things making that record, but I was scared to death and so I sang at the top of my lungs the whole time.

GWA I always thought that was intentional, that it was some sort of artistic statement...

CASE Some of it was on purpose and some of it was terror. The tones of terror.

GWA Your songwriting has always been idiosyncratic, especially in the way you structure your tunes. Where most composers are comfortable following the traditional verse-chorus-verse formula, you seem to shy away from that, and more so than ever on *Fox Confessor*—on many of the songs it's difficult to determine with any certainty which is the A part and which is the B.

CASE It's more natural for me to do it that way; I like my songs to just *go*. They shouldn't necessarily have a chorus that repeats all the time, but maybe just cycle through everything once and be done—say what you have to say and then get out. To me, that has more impact than repeating things over and over. I've always preferred songs that have one little part that happens only once. It's something my band and I refer to as the "Freddie Mercury," because there are songs on *Queen II* and *Sheer Heart Attack* that have like the most incredible melodic hook of all time that they do only once, and you're like, "Whoa!"—and you gotta listen to the song over and over. Not that I'm a Freddie Mercury who can come up with the best hooks ever, but that's what we always aspire to.

GWA Let's talk a bit about your guitar playing. I know you mostly strum; do you ever fingerpick?

CASE Sometimes, in the studio. But I always use a pick when playing live. Fingerpicking onstage requires too much concentration.

GWA What tuning do you use for the tenors?

CASE I usually tune it like the top four strings on a six-string, D G B E, but every now and again I'll use D G A D. On a couple of songs I'll retune one string and end up with weird, seat-of-the-pants tunings that no one else uses or knows.

GWA I understand you're something of a serious collector of tenors. What do you have, and what are some of your favorites?

CASE I've got quite a few. It's cool, but it also makes me feel like a huge nerd. They do all get used, though; I'm not an instrument hoarder. The first one I bought was a Gibson TG-0. It's from the Sixties, but I don't know exactly what year. I love it so hard that I don't even care what year it is! [*laughs*] I've also got a Martin Size 5 from the Thirties, which is one of the greatest guitars of all time. I have a *(continued on page 89)*

MONKEY BUSINESS

An animated discussion with **JACK JOHNSON** *about his triumphant soundtrack to* Curious George.

BY HAROLD STEINBLATT

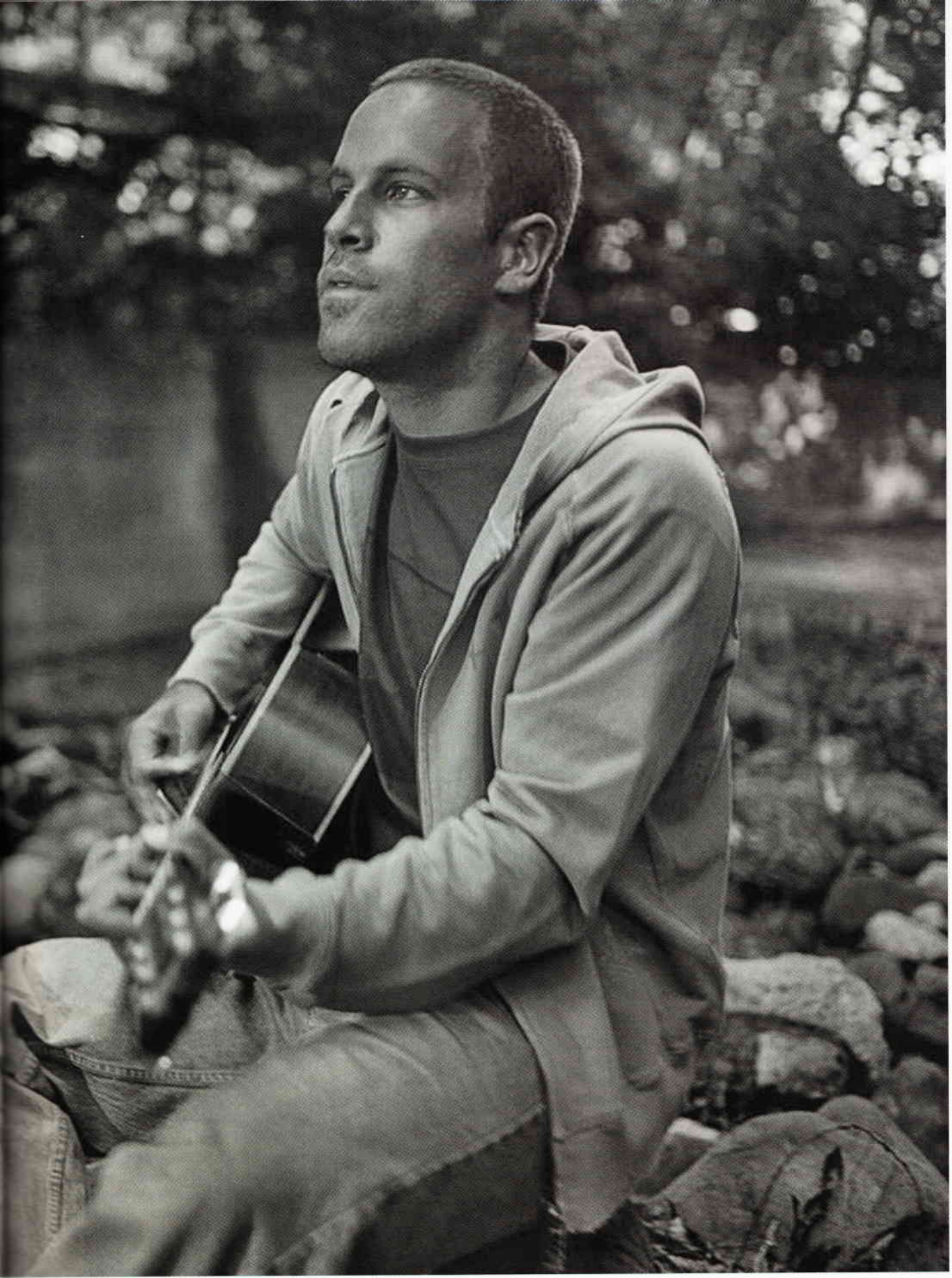
JACK JOHNSON, HAWAII'S greatest export since the grass skirt, is one brave singer-songwriter. That he is physically fearless is well known; Jack's a championship-caliber surfer. But just this year he confronted a demon far more daunting than any monster wave: his own insecurities.

Yes, even Grammy-nominated stars with three brilliant albums under their belts can be unsure of themselves. After all, Johnson, even with that soothing vocal style and beautifully smooth guitar technique, is a flesh-and-blood human being. The odd thing is that until the enormous success of last year's *In Between Dreams*, he was insecure about his *songwriting*.

"My sense," Johnson says, "that maybe it was all a fluke didn't really disappear until after [that album]." But there still remained one chink in Jack's perception of his own artistry: He couldn't imagine himself ever writing a song to order, so to speak, a skill that helped make legends of people like Irving Berlin, Carole King and Burt Bacharach.

Now Johnson—and millions of others—knows that he *can* do it, thanks to the stunning soundtrack he composed for the hit animated movie *Curious George*. The most impressive thing about the album, *Sing-A-Longs and Lullabies for the Film Curious George* (Brushfire), is that Johnson resisted the temptation to write safe, cute-as-hell songs that would excite legions of ten-year-olds but no one else. Instead, he wrote tunes that have strong adult appeal both musically and lyrically. "I wanted to make a real record," he says, "something that both children and their parents could enjoy."

He's done that, in the process demonstrating once again his knack for creating exciting, acoustic guitar-based arrangements. From the percussive six-string rhythm playing on "Talk of the Town," to the unison vocal-guitar lines of "People Watching," to the strummed bed of ukuleles on "Upside Down," *Sing-A-Longs and*



Lullabies for the Film Curious George is a verdant acoustic paradise.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

GUITAR WORLD ACOUSTIC How did you get involved with the *Curious George* project?

JACK JOHNSON My manager was contacted and asked if I'd be interested in writing one song for the movie. It sounded like fun to me, so I just agreed right off the bat. I received brief segments of a couple of scenes to help guide me, and, after working out some ideas on a four-track, I came up with a song. They liked it and asked for another one, "if you have any ideas and are up to it." I don't know if the intention was to slowly get me to do the whole thing, but I kind of beat them to the punch by saying, "If there's more, I'm excited to do as much as you guys want." I wrote the second song, and it evolved from there; I soon had seven or eight completed.

GWA What were those first two songs?

JOHNSON "Talk of the Town," a real upbeat tune, and "Wrong Turn," a very sad one. The whole idea was that since Curious George doesn't speak, the way to convey what was going on in his head was through the songs. "Wrong Turn," for example, gives a sense of how he feels when he becomes separated from the Man in the Yellow Hat. So the music actually plays a direct part in telling the story.

GWA Did you have any previous experience writing for animated films?

JOHNSON No, though I wrote the music for *Thicker Than Water* and *The September Sessions*, two of my surf films. The way it worked with those was my drummer and I watched the screen and played along with the scenes. I followed a similar approach with the animated segments I was sent for *Curious George*, though one thing was different. Others involved with the film—mainly Bonne Radford, the producer, and Matt Williames, the animator—gave me direct suggestions about specific songs, like, "Is there any way we could work in a line about this?"

GWA Did that make you uncomfortable?

JOHNSON It was different, but it was fun, and I quickly came to embrace it. I did feel reluctant when it was decided that "Talk of the Town," whose lyrics I'd specifically tailored for the images in the opening scene, would be used elsewhere in the film. But when I saw where it was placed, I had to admit that it did, in fact, work better.

GWA Now that you've discovered that you can actually write songs to meet someone else's demands, do you see yourself doing this sort of thing on a regular basis?

JOHNSON Maybe a little bit. I enjoyed it. I don't think I would have been ready to do it in the past, because I think I've only just recently gotten a little bit of confidence in my songwriting.

GWA Given your track record, I suspect this statement will surprise more than a few people.

JOHNSON After my first album [*Brushfire Fairytales*], I thought, "I wrote this group of songs that people liked a lot," but it didn't necessarily give me confidence as a songwriter. My sense that maybe it was all a fluke didn't disappear until after *In Between Dreams*, when I suddenly realized that I'd put out three records that listeners seemed to genuinely identify with. This helped give me the confidence to do the *Curious George* project. But the truth *(continued on page 89)*

STATIA MOLEWSKI/RETNA

Changing THEIR TUNE

Hard rockers NICKELBACK haul out the acoustics and strike platinum with *All The Right Reasons*. Guitarists Chad Kroeger and Ryan Peake reflect on their great unplugged gamble.

BY DAN EPSTEIN **PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEIL ZLOZOWER**

"WE'VE HAD 29 STRAIGHT DAYS OF RAIN," groans Nickelback singer and rhythm guitarist Chad Kroeger as he heads to the band's rehearsal complex in Vancouver. "It's just been brutal. Twenty-nine days without seeing the sun. There are so many people up here holding razor blades to their wrists right now!"

Not Kroeger. Nickelback's new album, *All The Right Reasons* (Roadrunner), has already passed the two-million sales mark in the U.S., an achievement that no doubt has taken the edge off all that wet, British Columbian gloom. Kroeger is particularly gratified by the success of "Photograph," the album's nostalgic, acoustic-driven first single. Not only is he proud of it on an artistic level—"it's one of the best songs I've ever written"—but he regards its immense popularity as a sign that Nickelback's fans are open to the band's departing from its signature electric guitar-heavy sound. In fact, though *All The Right Reasons* has plenty of the meaty, riff-driven rock that dominated earlier albums like 2001's *Silver Side Up* and 2003's *The Long Road*, the new release contains several tracks—"Savin' Me," "Far Away," "If Everyone Cared," "Rock Star"—where the acoustic guitar is featured front and center.

Not that Nickelback have been averse to a little unplugged action in the past; hits like "Someday" and "How You Remind Me" feature background acoustics, and the band usually perform a brief unplugged segment in their live show. But *All The Right Reasons*, with its jangly heartbeat, represents a genuine departure for the band.

GWA caught up with Kroeger and co-guitarist Ryan Peake as Nickelback rehearsed for their upcoming U.S. arena tour, and got the lowdown on their acoustic playing, gear and interesting, if haphazard, use of altered tunings.

Chad Kroeger (left) and Ryan Peake

GUITAR WORLD ACOUSTIC While I wouldn't describe your new album as "Nickelback Unplugged," it does seem like the acoustic guitars are a lot more prominent this time around.

RYAN PEAKE Oh, absolutely. I don't want to say that this album represents the "mellowing" of a rock band—there's still some totally aggressive music on there—but in the more melodic spots, going with the acoustics felt right. In fact, we tried acoustics on every song, if only to get different textures, more audio imagery in there.

GWA Were most of the songs written on acoustic?

CHAD KROEGER I'd say 80 percent of the new tunes started out that way. Because with an acoustic guitar, you can sit in the back of the bus and write—you don't need a half-stack, an effects rack and three different electrics. You can just sit there with one acoustic, come up with a melody, and play around with some chord progressions.

GWA That leads me to believe you do a lot of writing on the road.

KROEGER Oh yeah, absolutely.

GWA That's interesting, because many artists say they have a hard time composing while on tour.

KROEGER Well, that's because they'd rather party! [*laughs*] No, it *is* hard. But we're very fortunate to be able to travel in our own buses, so when I'm in the back, just singing away, I don't have to be concerned about waking anyone up, or worry that everybody's judging every little thing I come up with. I'm just back there singing my little heart out, waiting to find that magic little melody I'll fall in love with.

GWA Is that how you came up with "Photograph"?

KROEGER Yeah. I started playing these four chords in a circle, and not barring the top two notes—just letting them ring out—and it really created this orchestral sound. So I'm noodling around, and this line just shoots out of my mouth—"Look at this photograph." I was like, Wow, that's really interesting; where am I gonna go with this? And then immediately I thought of this photograph of me with Joey, our engineer. Everyone who picks it up always smiles, because you can see that we're visibly hammered; we have those natural, big smiles on our faces like we're having the best time of our lives, and he's got this great big thing on his head that looks like the Stanley Cup, but is actually a champagne chiller.

It was strange, because after that first image flashed into my head, the next line that came to me was, "And this is where I grew up." So I was like, How the hell am I gonna tie this together? For a while, I was sure that I'd have to cut one of those lines to get it all to make sense. And then I came up with "This is where I went to school," and the stuff about the first girl that I kissed, and getting into trouble at school, and things we used to do like singing along to the radio in the old arcade. So I had all these images, and then when I got to the chorus, I thought about having a big photo album laying open on the floor and reminiscing about all these old times. When I played that part to the guys, everyone started getting real excited about it, like, "We're on to something!"

GWA At what point did you decide that the recorded version would be primarily acoustic-driven?

KROEGER I always thought it would be an acoustic song. It's got a real small-town vibe to

it, and those acoustic textures are just crucial to the song. If you took the standard "hit the distortion pedal and away we go" approach, it would lose some of that vibe.

PEAKE We actually had to fight Roadrunner about making it more acoustic than electric. They wanted it to be a little heavier, but we were like, "Um, I don't know, man—that doesn't feel right."

KROEGER They were just worried because we're a rock band, and they thought it might not be well-received on rock radio stations. So we actually did this tiny, tiny little overdub of distorted guitar that's barely even in there, but just enough so that the [programmers] can feel good about themselves.

GWA On your last album, *The Long Road*, you guys used Gibson SJ-200's and Tacoma baritones for the acoustic tracks. Did you bust out the same guitars this time around?

PEAKE We didn't pull out the Tacomas, but we still really dig the Gibsons—the tones we get from them are so fantastic! We had one set up with a pickup—I think it was a Fishman—and we miked it up with a Rode acoustic microphone. It sounded so good, we decided to roll with that for the whole record.

GWA What do you string the SJ-200's with?

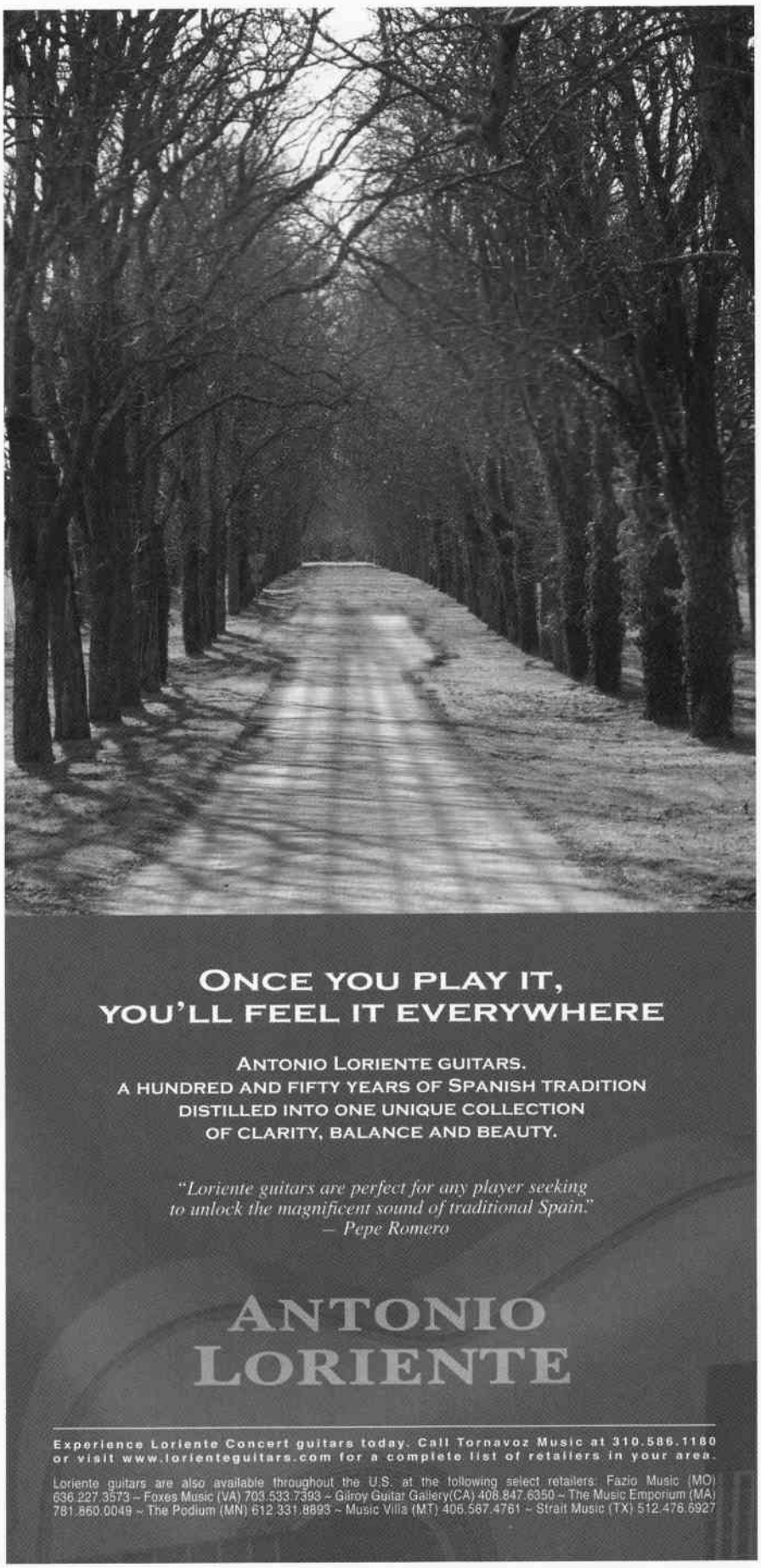
PEAKE Ernie Balls. I haven't played as much as I normally do in the last two months, and my fingers are killing me. [*laughs*] So I'm taking a step down from the .013-.056's I used to .011-.052's, and we'll see how that works.

KROEGER I always like to use a really, really thick gauge. I mean, we're talking about telephone cables—as thick as possible. Especially when you're tuned down low, you don't want those things flopping and rattling around.

GWA What tunings do you generally favor?

KROEGER I always say that the less flesh you have on the fretboard, the better. If you can tune the guitar so that you've got some open strings ringing along, you get a big, beautiful sound. So we do a lot of messing around with the strings to get there.

PEAKE I often tune the B or high E string up or down a note so that it sounds cool when it's ringing out. I did that in "Photograph," where I tuned the B string down a half step. It was just kind of trial and error! [*For further information on the band's arrangement of "Photograph," see sidebar—Ed.*] There were some other songs where I did that, though I'd have to actually be sitting down with a guitar to be able to tell you which they are. We're really kinda loosey-goosey when it comes to that kind of stuff. I've always played by ear, and if I don't think something sounds right to me I tune it until it sounds *(continued on page 36)*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Picture PERFECT

CHAD KROEGER SHOWS YOU HOW TO PLAY "PHOTOGRAPH," AND DISCUSSES THE GEAR HE USED IN THE MAKING OF THE NICKELBACK HIT.

By Andy Aledort

GUITAR WORLD ACOUSTIC How do you play the primary acoustic guitar part that drives the verse and chorus sections of "Photograph?"

CHAD KROEGER For that part, I use typical barre chord-type shapes [**FIGURE 1**], but instead of barring across all of the strings, I allow the top two, the B and the high E, to ring open. The repeated down-up syncopated strumming pattern gives sort of a cyclical feel to the four-chord progression, and the sound of it inspired me to grab onto a melody and start writing some lyrics. And we tuned down one half-step when we recorded the song.

GWA Why?

KROEGER There is a repeated vocal part that goes through the entire tune, and when tuned to concert pitch, I found I was straining a bit towards the end of the song. Tuning down a half step solved the problem.

GWA It's interesting that, though the verse and chorus sections are very similar, you were able to build a compelling arrangement using only small alterations as the song progressed.

KROEGER I found that I didn't have to move very far from the basic idea to maintain the drama in the arrangement. I play the same four-chord progression up until the two-bar section that comes before the chorus [**FIGURE 2**]. For those two bars, all I do is move the same chord shape that I used for Badd4 down to the third fret, still allowing the top two open strings to ring out, which makes the chords G6 and Aadd2.

After the second chorus, the chord progression changes again very slightly [**FIGURE 3**] as I introduce Cmaj7 and then slide up two frets to D6add9.

GWA How many acoustic guitar tracks are there on the song?

KROEGER I would say there are four separate tracks of acoustic guitar on the choruses, and there are additional little texture overdubs, too, including some harmonics.

GWA Where was the song recorded?

KROEGER We recorded everything at my home studio, Mountain View. The board is an SSL that used to be in Little Mountain Studios in Vancouver, where [*producers*] Bob Rock and Bruce Fairbairn used it for Motley Crue's *Dr. Feelgood*, Aerosmith's *Pump* and some Bon Jovi records—albums that together sold tens of millions of copies. That's a pretty good board.

GWA What guitar, microphones and outboard gear did you use to cut "Photograph?"

KROEGER We took a jumbo Yamaha CJX32 six-string and removed the guts—which basically are a microphone, a three-band EQ and a couple of knobs—stuck them inside a Gibson SJ-200, and recorded it plugged straight into the board. We also miked the guitar with Rode microphones to get some more low-end body into the sound.

GWA What about a compressor/limiter?

KROEGER We used a fantastic-sounding vintage Urei 1176.

GWA And strings and picks?

KROEGER We use Ernie Ball strings, across the board. On the acoustics, we'll experiment with different gauges. Picks are medium Dunlops. ■

Tune down one half step
(low to high) E♭ A♭ D♭ G♭ B♭ E♭

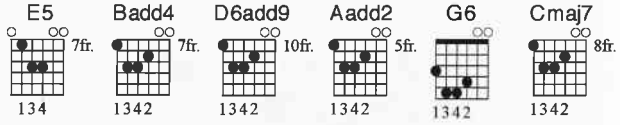

FIGURE 1 verse (0:00) **and chorus** (0:59)

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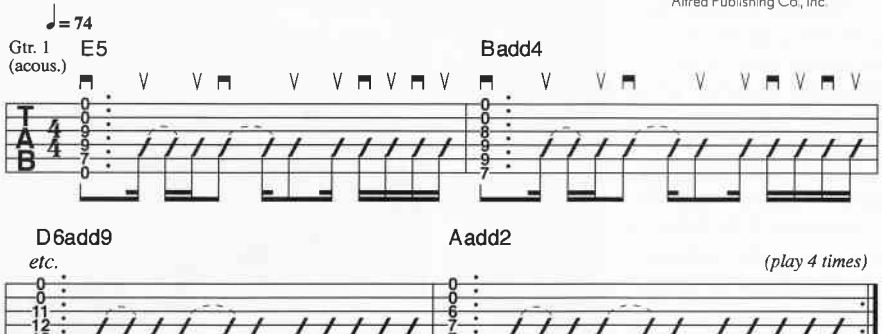


FIGURE 2 verse tag (0:52)

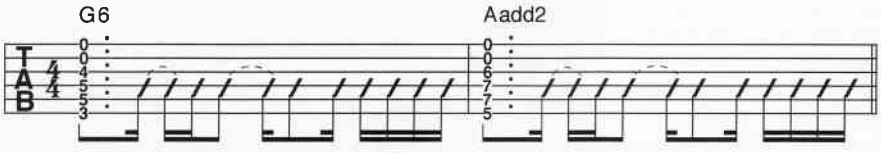
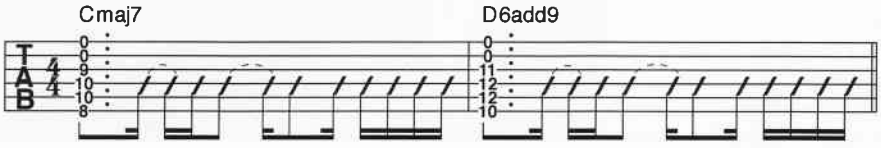


FIGURE 3 second chorus tag (2:51)



better. I'm really bad at theory talk, but I know what I like. [*laughs*]

KROEGER Yeah, there's no standard tuning for us—it's just some seriously illogical bullshit. [*laughs*] Reproducing that live can be a bitch!

PEAKE Live, there are a lot of times where Chad plays in drop-D while I'll be in standard; I don't like doing the drop tuning on the acoustic—it just doesn't sound as full to me.

GWA Do guitar-playing fans ever come up to you and ask, "What the hell is the tuning on that song?"

KROEGER Yep, all the time! I always say to them, "I don't know, dude—you'll have to ask my guitar tech!" [*laughs*] I really have no idea...

GWA You've featured live acoustic segments in your last couple of tours. Will you be doing that again this time out?

PEAKE Absolutely! To tell you the truth, I enjoy that part of the set the most, because that's when I can hear myself best.

KROEGER Our stage looks like the Klingon Bird of Prey: there's two wings that come off the side, and then it's got this massive extension that goes out to a lower stage right in the middle of the crowd. And if we don't sit down there with some acoustic guitars, it would be quite a waste of space. [*laughs*]

PEAKE I'd like to extend the acoustic set a little beyond what we've done in the past. We've played one or two songs, but I wanna add a couple more—maybe incorporate some older stuff that we haven't done in a while, or even do a couple of cover tunes. It's great to kind of bring down the mood with the acoustic guitars, but it's also really cool to play a few of the grittier songs with the acoustic.

GWA I can see a song like "Rock Star," for example, working well as part of an acoustic set.

PEAKE That's what we think, actually. We'll have to see in rehearsal how it works out, but we're definitely considering that, sure.

KROEGER That's another song that was born in the back of the bus, just sitting down and banging the hell out of an acoustic guitar.

GWA It's sort of like a modern version of Dr. Hook's "Cover of the Rolling Stone."

KROEGER That's exactly what I had in mind. I wanted to talk about all the stupid shit. It took nine hours to write all those lyrics, and it had never taken me that long before. But every single line had to be perfect, it had to be really clever; I wanted each one of them to put a smile on someone's face.

GWA And then *(continued on page 89)*

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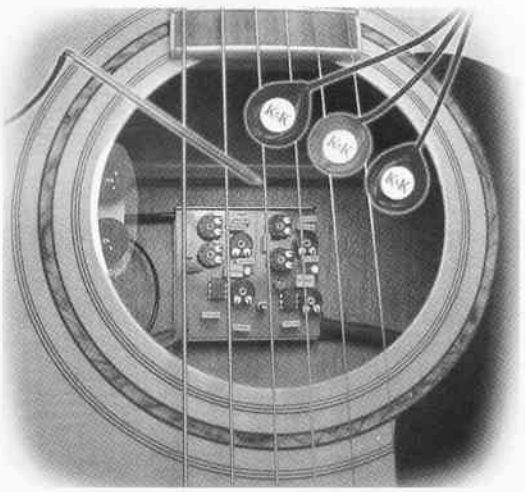

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TOUGH LOVE

BEN HARPER takes a good hard look at himself and at the world on his new double album, *Both Sides of the Gun.*

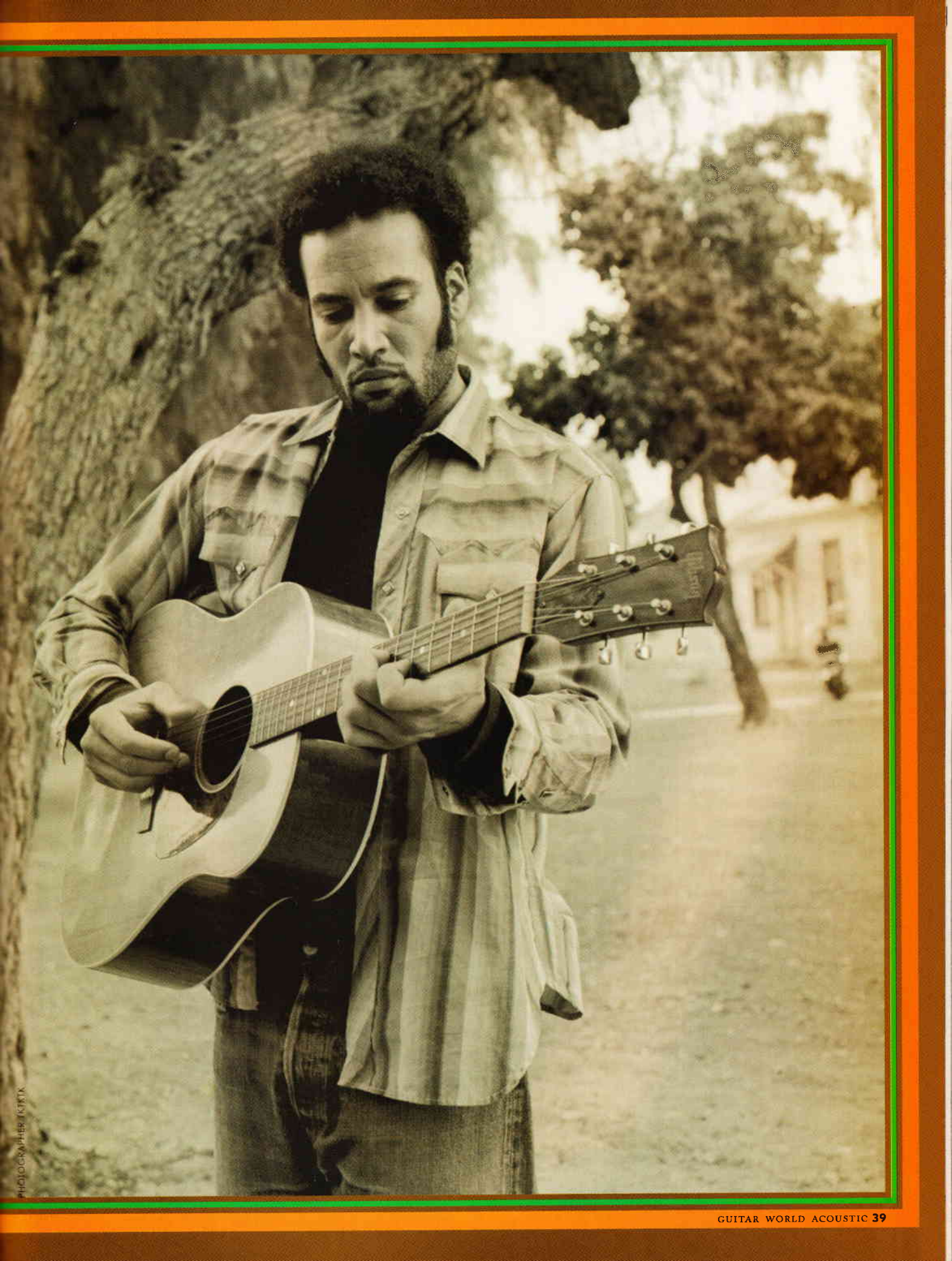
by Alan di Perna

NINETY MINUTES FROM LOS ANGELES, there is a place where you can check out an Indian sarod or an Appalachian dulcimer, noodle on an oud or pick up the latest hot African kora album, all without being harassed or hurried. Countless musicians love the Claremont Folk Center, but none more than Ben Harper, whose grandparents opened the shop back in the 1950's; it continues to be owned by the family. Harper grew up at the Center, and this was where he not only became intimate with stringed instruments both exotic and homespun, but also received a priceless education from many of the venerable folk legends and hip L.A. guitarists who passed through during his childhood and adolescence.

"People always ask me, 'How come you're so eclectic? How come you're musically dyslexic?' " Harper notes. "I just laugh and say, 'Man, if you only knew.' If you take one step in there, a lot of those questions are answered."

The Folk Center was Harper's gateway to the rich musical culture and highly charged socio-political milieu of the mid 20th century folk boom and its aftermath. Few modern musicians, if any, have this kind of grounding. It was at the Folk Center that Harper was introduced to the legendary bluesman Brownie McGhee and the multidimensional purveyor of American folk and world music, Taj Mahal—roots music gurus whom Harper would go on to accompany as a sideman. The Folk Center is also where he first met and learned from guitar greats Ry Cooder and David Lindley.

These formative experiences—combined with a voracious appetite for rock, reggae and hip hop—went into the creation of Harper's 1992 debut album, *Welcome to the Cruel World*, and his emergence as one of the most distinctive voices among current singer-songwriters. On *Cruel World* and subsequent discs, he has shown himself to be a romantic who also wears his progressive politics on his sleeve—and is, to top things off, a tasteful and expressive guitarist with a wickedly wide stylistic vocabulary.



PHOTOGRAPHER: KIRK

All these qualities are eminently manifest on Harper's new recording, *Both Sides of the Gun* (Virgin), a double-disc exercise in yin and yang. The first CD is a set of angry political songs, set to bristling Seventies funk soul grooves and inflected with Traffic/Allmans overtones by Harper and his excellent band, the Innocent Criminals, plus sundry guest players. In somewhat stark contrast, CD two is filled with introspective, acoustic guitar-accompanied meditations on loneliness and romantic disillusionment, burnished by wistful string quartet orchestrations and other tastefully understated instrumental backing.

While the entire album's music could easily have fit on a single disc, Harper insisted on two. "The songs demanded it," he says. "That's the only way the whole thing makes sense."

But Harper sees an underlying unity in the seemly divergent concerns of the two CD's. "I think that matters of the heart and matters of personal freedom are both part of making one of the most important political statements you can make," he reasons. "So in that way the two discs reflect each other."

Another unifying factor is Harper's superb acoustic guitar work. "There's a lot of acoustic on this album," he says. "Even the electric guitar songs have an acoustic supporting them." Harper's unplugged playing—especially his melodic fingerpicking and nimble sliding on Weissenborn lap steel—is, like his lyrics, eloquently terse yet studded with flashes of incandescent brilliance. The Weissenborn, of course, has become strongly associated with Harper, who was introduced to the beautiful 1920's instruments by the famously eclectic Lindley when the latter was a Claremont Folk Center regular.

Both Sides of the Gun is the real Harper, in all his glorious duality. The album is charged with love and anger, hope and disappointment—the stuff of everyday life—played out in the dark context of an increasingly grim new world order. It is also a nakedly political statement, crying out for the oppressed while also anticipating a time of liberation when those currently fingering the trigger might indeed find themselves on the wrong side of the gun.

* * * * *

GUITAR WORLD ACOUSTIC It's cool that the album starts out with "Better Way," with your old friend David Lindley guesting on tambura.

BEN HARPER Yes. By the way, that's a Turkish bowed-back instrument, not the *tamboura*, an Indian drone instrument that many people know. The end of the song just climaxes with David playing that thing with his exquisite sense of melody.

GWA You play the lap slide solo in "Better Way" on a Weissenborn. Given that it was Lindley who turned you on to that guitar, there's a sense of coming full circle there.

HARPER Yeah, and when David heard that solo he leaned over, looked at me and said, "Is *somebody* angry?" What you hear on the recording was my first take; I did a few more after that, but the engineer just looked at me and said, "Come on, man, you're done here."

GWA How is the Weissenborn miked on that track?

HARPER Just a single mic, a U47, I believe.

GWA How was it tuned?

HARPER I think it's tuned up to F. You just take normal open D tuning—D A D F# A D—and bring that up one-and-a-half steps.

GWA What kind of acoustic did you play on "Gather 'Round the Stone?"

HARPER That's a Martin 00-18. I wanted something that could cut. 'Cause there's so much low end bass drum kicking through the whole thing, plus a lot of percussion and vocals. The smaller bodied guitars like the Martin double 0's can cut more.

GWA [Blues harmonica ace] Charlie Musselwhite does a vocal cameo on that song. How did that come about?

HARPER He was in town that day and we were hanging out together. He

BEN WATTS/CORBIS OUTLINE

was feeling the song's message strong enough that it was right for me, Charlie and the Innocent Criminals to jump on the mic and do that gang vocal.

GWA I guess he's an old friend.

HARPER Yeah, we go back a ways. We played together on a John Lee Hooker track, "Burnin' Hell" [*from the 1998 Hooker compilation album* The Best of Friends—*Ed.*]. Charlie and I have been friends ever since.

GWA "Gather 'Round the Stone," with its unambiguous, angry references to the war in Iraq, is very much in the folk protest tradition.

HARPER The song says what it says in clear and no uncertain terms. I wanted to make something that Bob Dylan would be proud of on a "Masters of War" level.

GWA Speaking of Dylan, the uptempo I-IV-V structure of "Please Don't Talk About Murder While I'm Eating" reminds me of "Tombstone Blues," from *Highway 61 Revisited*.

HARPER That's where folk, blues and country all meet. That style of push is an absolute descendant of John Lee Hooker. Dylan and John Lee were pals, you know—so John Lee told me, anyway. He said, "If you see Bob Dylan, tell him he owes me money for puttin' out my window." So yeah, with "Tombstone Blues," Bob owned that feel. But "Please Don't Talk About Murder" also has kind of a Johnny Cash thing to it—that "I've Been Everywhere" kind of vibe. So there are all kinds of connections there.

GWA The track has a really nice kind of amped-up energy about it.

HARPER Thanks. You've got an acoustic—a 1950's Gibson J-50—in the right speaker and a cleanly amped and miked Telecaster in the left. I got a lot out of that Tele through a Fender Deluxe amp, no effects, distant-miked about a foot or two from the amp. That makes a really nice combination with an acoustic guitar.

GWA "Black Rain" is perhaps the strongest political statement on the album. It pretty much predicts a revolution: "It won't be long till people flood the streets and take you down." Wow.

HARPER Yep, that's where I'm at with that. The song is a statement.

GWA Obviously it's about Hurricane Katrina and what went down in New Orleans. But it says so much more than that.

HARPER I can only hope so. On a civil rights level, *(continued on page 90)*

THOM LUEA/STAR FILE

Gilmour Pearls

A how-to guide to the best of acoustic Pink Floyd

By Jimmy Brown

FIGURE 1 "Wish You Were Here," intro (0:39)

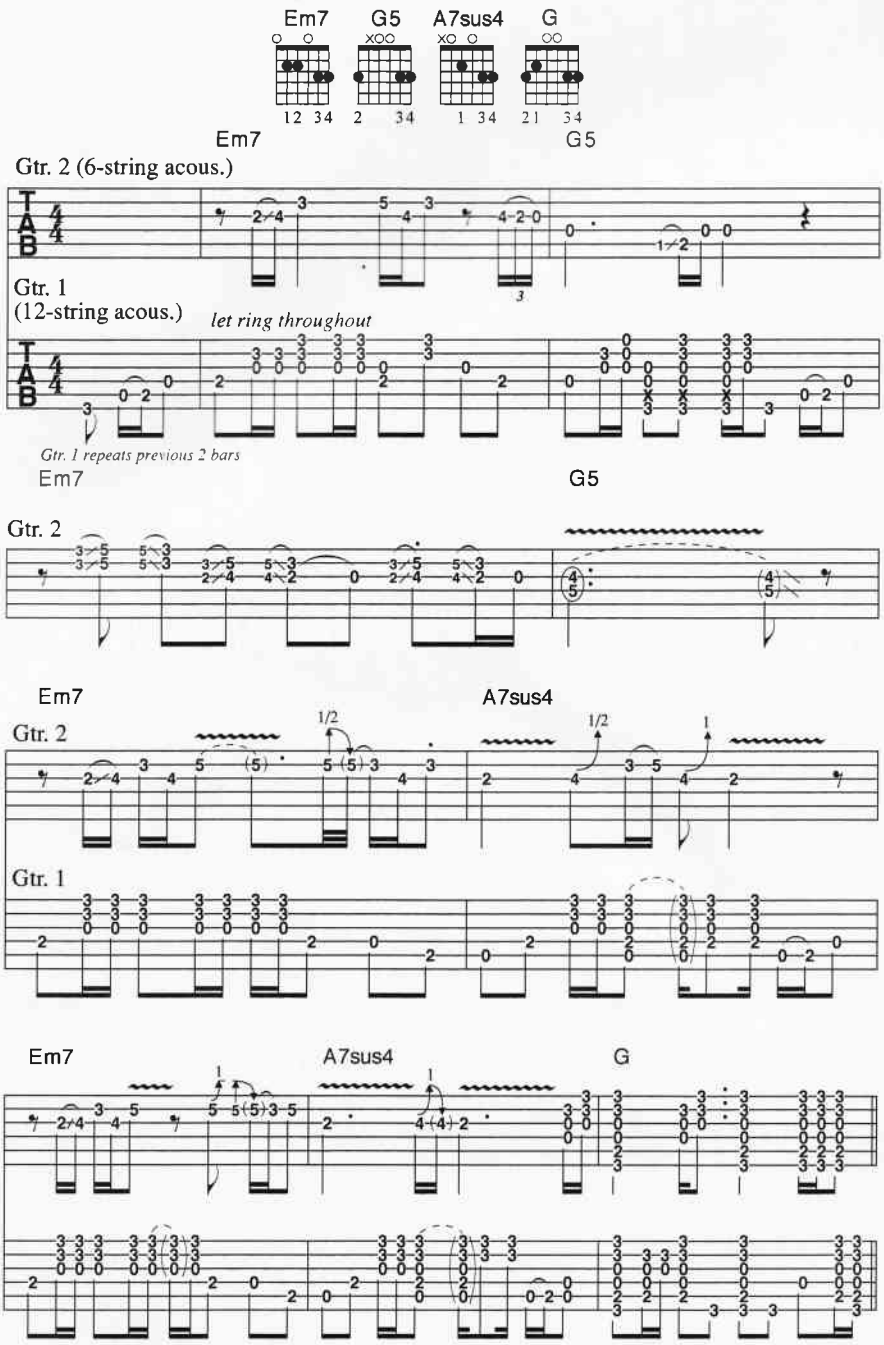
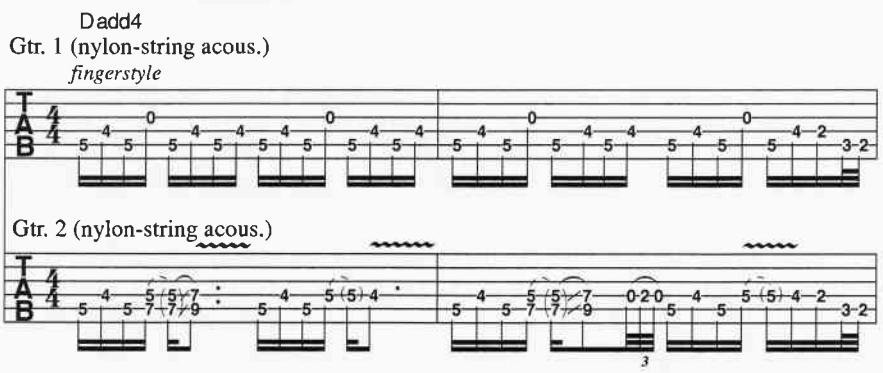


FIGURE 2 "Goodbye Blue Sky," intro (0:26)



WHEN ONE THINKS of the guitar and Pink Floyd, the first thing that usually comes to mind is David Gilmour's soaring electric work on such classic-rock staples as "Money," "Time," "Comfortably Numb" and "Another Brick in the Wall (Part II)." But Gilmour's brilliance on the Stratocaster should not obscure the fact that his acoustic playing has always been an important component of Pink Floyd's music. Even *Dark Side of the Moon* (1973), the one Floyd album to feature electric guitars almost exclusively, includes several songs with very acoustic-like accompaniments. Among these is "Brain Damage," which is included in the lesson below.

The original Pink Floyd lineup featured Syd Barrett on guitar; Gilmour didn't come aboard until a few months after the release of the band's debut album, *The Piper at the Gates of Dawn* (1967). Though Barrett is primarily remembered for his psychedelic "sound painting" on the Fender Telecaster—not to mention his equally psychedelic lyrics and arresting stage presence—he did use six- and 12-string acoustic guitars to provide more down-to-earth accompaniment on that album. You can hear him strumming garden-variety open chords on "Flaming," "Pow R. Toc H.," "The Gnome" and "Scarecrow." On Floyd's second album, *A Saucerful of Secrets* (1968), Barrett played acoustic on "Remember a Day" and "Jugband Blues," though by the time that record was released he had left the band. Gilmour subsequently took his place as Pink Floyd's lead guitarist and musical director, and our lesson will focus on his acoustic playing with Pink Floyd.

Gilmour has cited Bob Dylan, Pete Seeger and other folk guitarists as his major influences on acoustic. And the impact of the blues, so apparent in Gilmour's understated, melodic electric style, is also clearly evident in his acoustic playing; on "Seamus" (*Meddle*, 1971), for example, he plays a Robert Johnson-style slow blues in E (with his guitar tuned down a whole step, to sound in the key of D) and overdubs a swampy slide part in open D tuning (low to high: (D A D F♯ A D).

"WISH YOU WERE HERE"

***(Wish You Were Here*, 1975)**

One of Gilmour's most recognizable acoustic parts is the 12-string riff that introduces and later reappears in "Wish You Were Here." Played by Guitar 1 in **FIGURE 1**, this part contains an E minor pentatonic (E G A B D) bass-line melody played below a droning G5 chord (G D G) on strings 1-3. Be sure to keep your fretting hand's third and fourth fingers anchored on the second and first strings, respectively,

to allow the top three strings to ring throughout the figure. Also, notice how the three drone notes (G, D and G) serve different harmonic functions as the bass line moves from E (Em7) to D (G5/D) to A (A7sus4) before finally resolving to G.

Above this part, Gilmour plays a countermelody on a six-string acoustic, working within the first five frets and employing open G and D notes with great effect. Notice his sparse, lyrical phrasing and expressive use of legato finger slides, perfect-fourth double stops and bends. Use your third finger, reinforced by your second for added strength, to execute the bends, especially the one on the G string.

"GOODBYE BLUE SKY"

(The Wall, 1979)

"Goodbye Blue Sky" features some gorgeous fingerpicking on nylon-string guitar by Gilmour. In the intro (**FIGURE 2**), Guitar 1 plays arpeggiated chords in bars 1, 2, 5 and 7 and, in bars 3, 4 and 6, motifs in which the thumb plays an open-string bass note in a steady eighth-note pulse while the fingers pick a syncopated melody on the higher strings. When learning this part, you'll find it helpful to tap your foot on each eighth note. At the end of bar 2, **FIGURE 2**, the thumb articulates a pair of 32nd notes with consecutive downstrokes. Picking these two notes and the open A that immediately follows is the most technically demanding part of this passage and may require a bit of practice to master. If you find it too difficult to perform comfortably at tempo, you may want to pull off to the second 32nd note (the 2nd-fret B) instead of picking it.

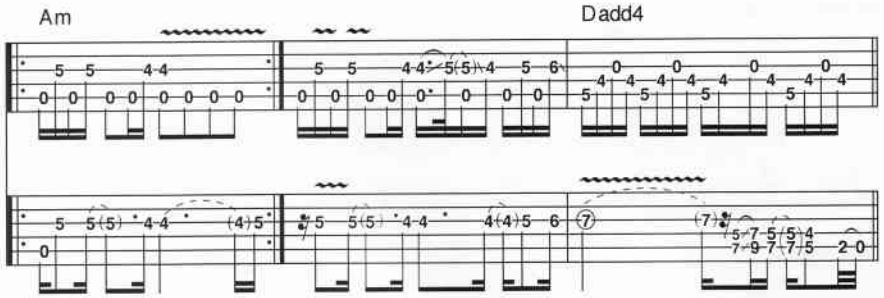
The Guitar 2 part, also played on nylon-string acoustic, loosely doubles Guitar 1's part. Gilmour momentarily interrupts the steady flow of 16th notes in a few choice spots with embellishments that involve holding and applying vibrato to some notes, sliding double-stops based on thirds up the neck, and adding a couple of quick decorative hammer-ons and pull-offs.

Both guitars converge in the verse (**FIGURE 3**), in which some of the parts in the intro are repeated. **FIGURE 4** shows the chorus, in which both guitars play thirds on strings 2 and 3 over a bass pedal; these notes are based on the D major scale (D E F♯ G A B C♯). I've added to the thirds some first-string notes that echo part of the harmonized vocals heard on the recording to form diatonic triads. Pick the third, second and first strings with your index, middle and ring fingers, respectively.

"WELCOME TO THE MACHINE"

(Wish You Were Here, 1975)

Another hallmark of Gilmour's style is his use of colorful chord voicings that blend open strings and fretted notes to create rich



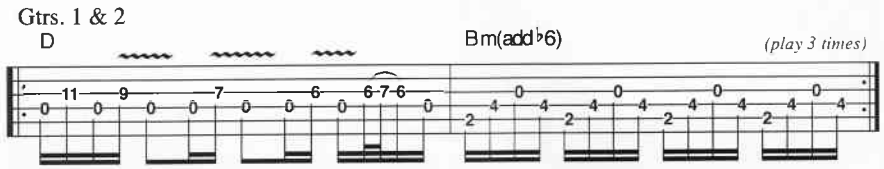


FIGURE 3 "Goodbye Blue Sky," verse (1:17)

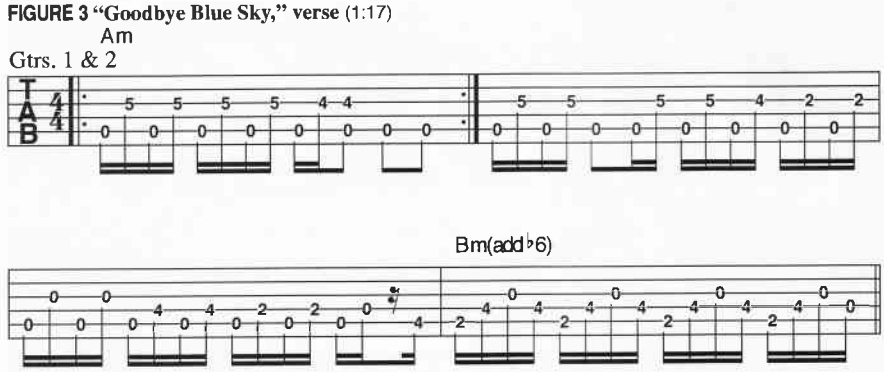


FIGURE 4 "Goodbye Blue Sky," chorus (2:18)

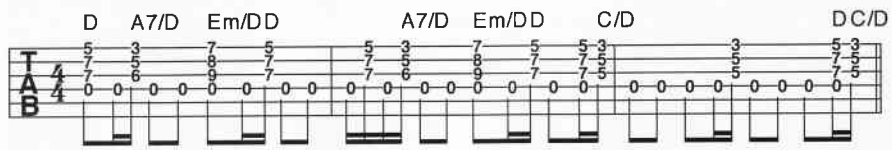


FIGURE 5 "Welcome to the Machine," chords

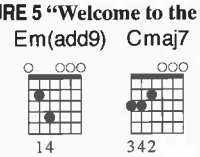


FIGURE 6 "Welcome to the Machine," interlude (2:38)

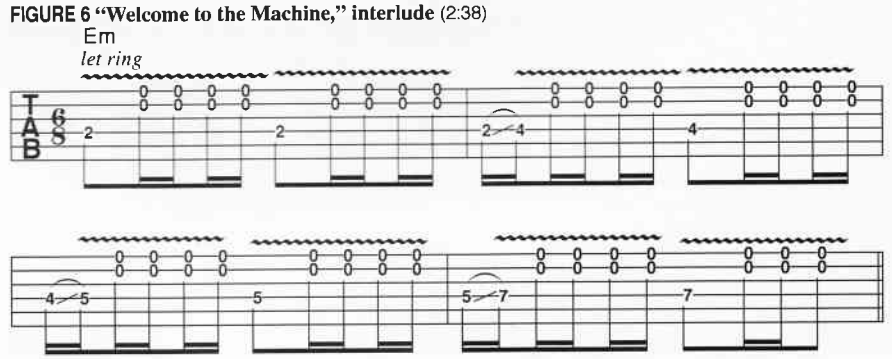


FIGURE 7 "Comfortably Numb," bridge chords (0:53)
"high-strung" tuning

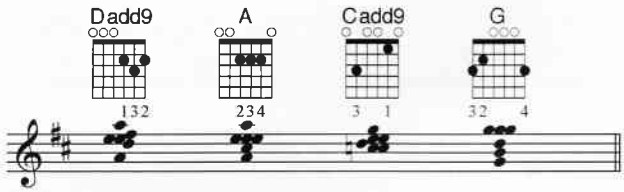


FIGURE 8 "Hey You," intro (0:00)
"high-strung" tuning

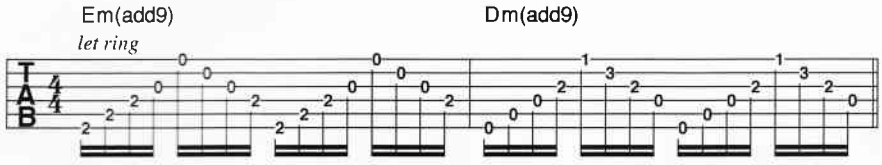


FIGURE 9 "Hey You," intro (arr. for standard tuning)

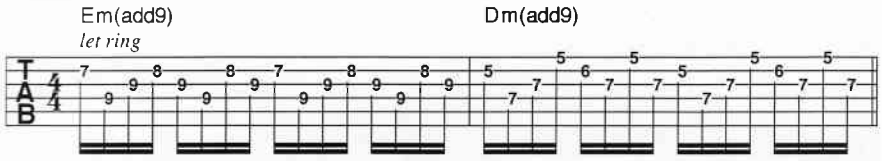


FIGURE 10 "Fearless," theme (0:14)
Open G tuning:
(low to high: D G D G B D)

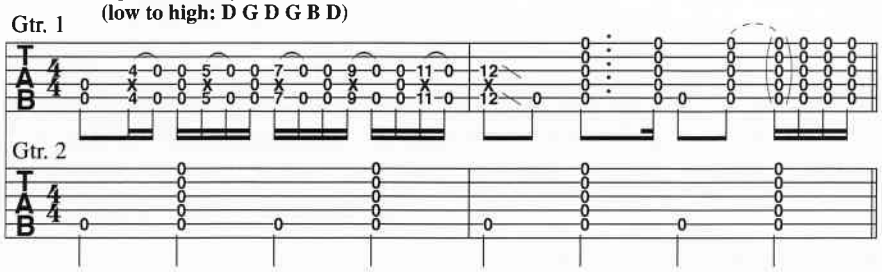


FIGURE 11 "Dogs," intro chords (0:00)
Tune down one step (low to high: D G C F A D).

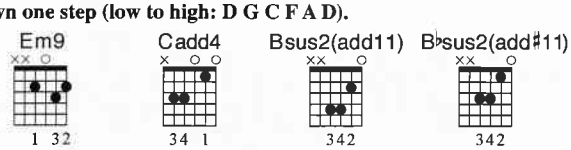
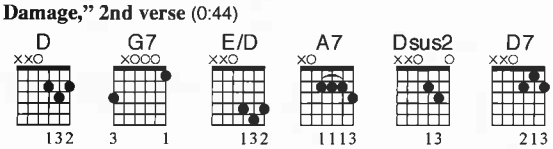
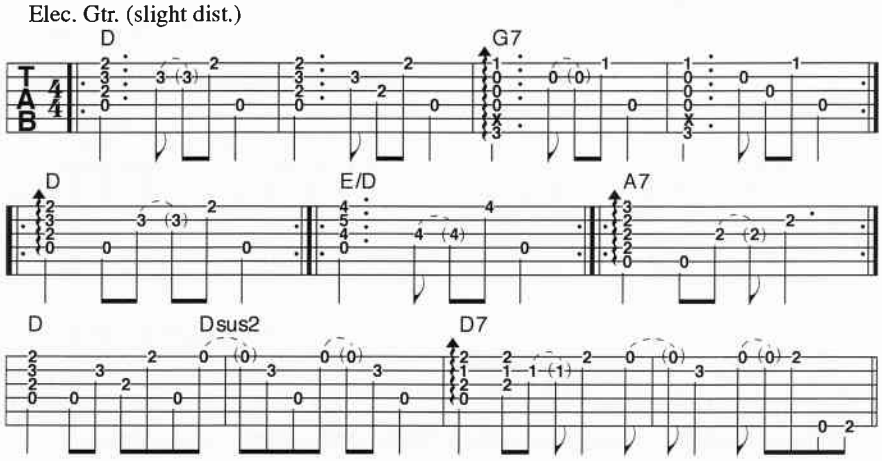


FIGURE 12 "Brain Damage," 2nd verse (0:44)





textures. "Welcome to the Machine," which Gilmour plays on a 12-string acoustic, is built around the Em(add9) and Cmaj7 voicings shown in **FIGURE 5**, in addition to ordinary open Em and A chords. All of the voicings sound especially lush, since on the 12-string the bottom four strings are doubled by strings tuned one octave higher.

In an interlude in the same tune, Gilmour plays a simple yet dramatic melody on the fourth string, applying vibrato and strumming the open first and second strings several times between each note (**FIGURE 6**). Fret each melody note with your third finger, arching that digit so that it mutes the third string when you strum the top two strings. Place your second finger behind your third finger to reinforce the vibratoed notes.

"COMFORTABLY NUMB"

(The Wall, 1979)

For the bridge in "Comfortably Numb" (the part sung by Gilmour), David used a guitar in his version of "high-strung," or Nashville, tuning to create high-pitched *cluster* (close-voiced) voicings with easy-to-finger grips. In conventional Nashville tuning, the bottom four strings are replaced by thinner strings tuned one octave higher. Gilmour's version differs in that he replaces the low E with a string tuned two octaves higher, making it the equivalent of a high E string. **FIGURE 7** shows the shapes Gilmour uses in this section; the resulting cluster voicings would be impossible to achieve in standard tuning. When playing these chords, allow all six strings to ring, and be careful not to mute any open strings with your fretting fingers.

"HEY YOU"

(The Wall, 1979)

Gilmour uses his high-strung tuning to even greater effect on "Hey You." As shown in **FIGURE 8**, the intro's ringing Em(add9) and Dm(add9) arpeggios are easily played in first position, and a natural chorus effect is created by the doubling of notes on different strings. **FIGURE 9** shows the same passage arranged for a guitar in standard tuning. Though the notes are the same, they don't sound as rich as they do when played Gilmour's way; also, the picking pattern is a bit more difficult, as it involves more frequent changes in direction.

"FEARLESS"

(Meddle, 1971)

On "Fearless" Gilmour employs the classic open G tuning (low to high: D G D G B D) for his strummed acoustic parts. **FIGURE 10** depicts the song's instrumental theme, in which Guitar 1 plays the melody in octaves, with pull-offs to the two open G strings (3 and 5). Use your fretting hand's second and third fingers, respectively, on

strings 5 and 3 to play the octaves, muting the fourth string with the fleshy underside of your second finger.

As this is going on, Guitar 2 plays an entirely open-string accompaniment. Note that in the chorus Gilmour barres the top five strings at the fifth, third, second and seventh frets to play C, B♭, A and D chords, respectively.

"DOGS"

(Animals, 1977)

"Dogs" has some cool and unusual chord voicings strummed on an acoustic tuned down one whole step (low to high: D G C F A D). **FIGURE 11** shows the four chord shapes Gilmour uses in the song's intro and verses. Later in the song, as the groove shifts to a half-time feel (3:42), he plays first-/second-position D, Em, C, D/C, G and F chords to create an anthem-like chorus.

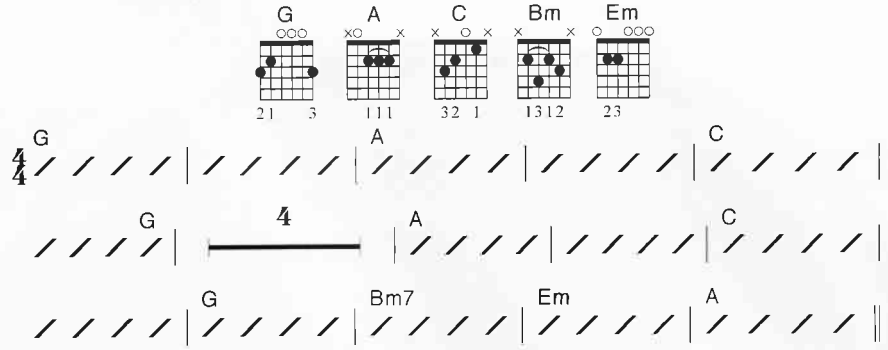
"BRAIN DAMAGE"

(Dark Side of the Moon, 1973)

On "Brain Damage" (*Dark Side of the Moon*), Gilmour, using mostly open chords, lays down acoustic-like rhythm guitar parts on a slightly overdriven Fender Stratocaster. **FIGURE 12** shows an excerpt from the first verse, in which Gilmour holds down chord shapes with his fretting hand while effecting a combination of strumming and single-note arpeggiation with his picking hand. A second guitar loosely doubles the part, adding to the texture by filling in chord tones. You can emulate this effect on a single guitar by allowing the pick to brush adjacent strings when picking the single notes.

For the first chorus, Gilmour strums the full chords depicted in **FIGURE 13**, as the bass, drums and organ join in with a laidback, half-time feel. To play this section, strum in a continuous down-up motion, randomly catching the strings or passing over them while tapping your foot on each beat to feel the groove, all the while working within the harmonic rhythms indicated by the bar lines. ■

FIGURE 13 "Brain Damage," chorus (1:16)



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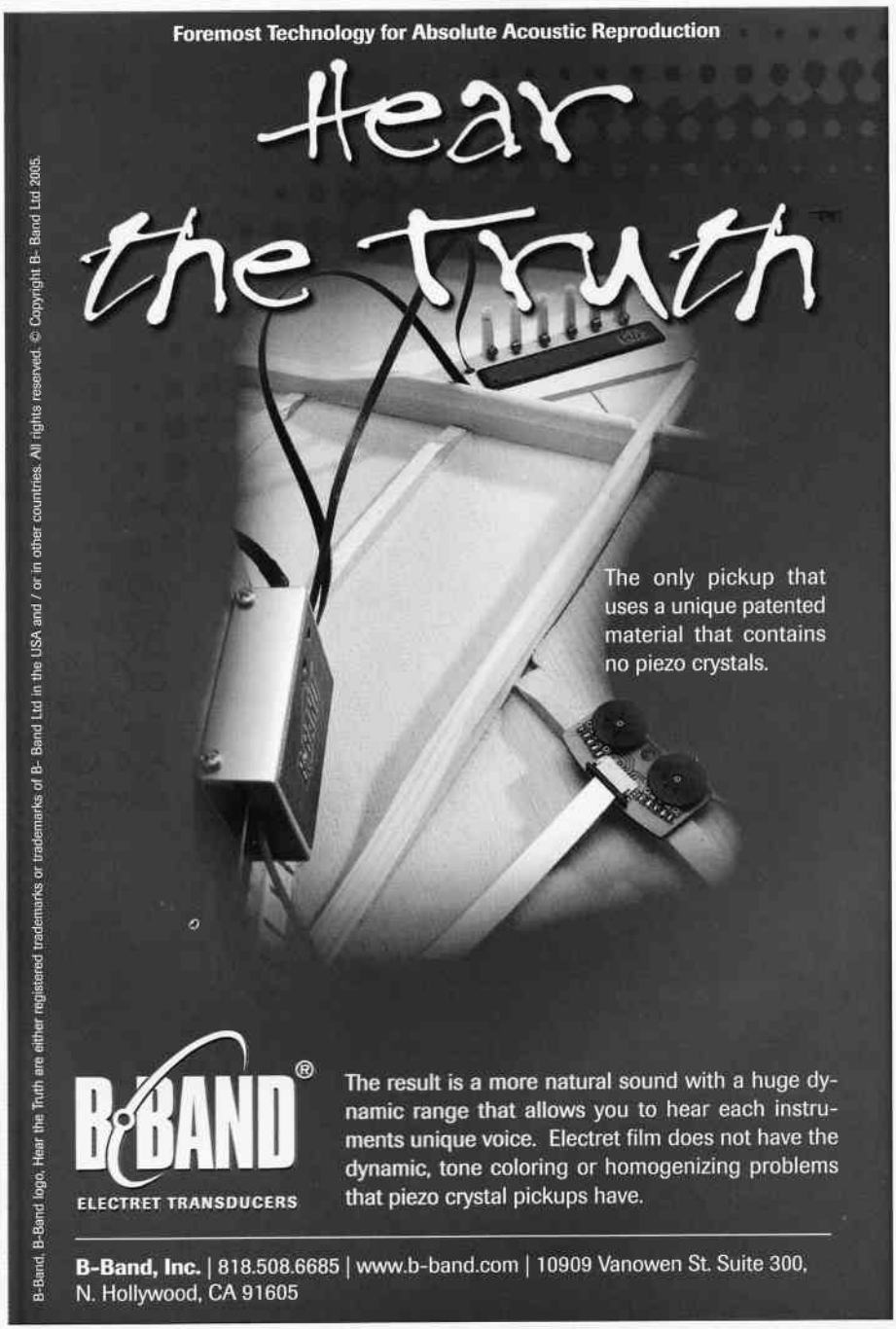
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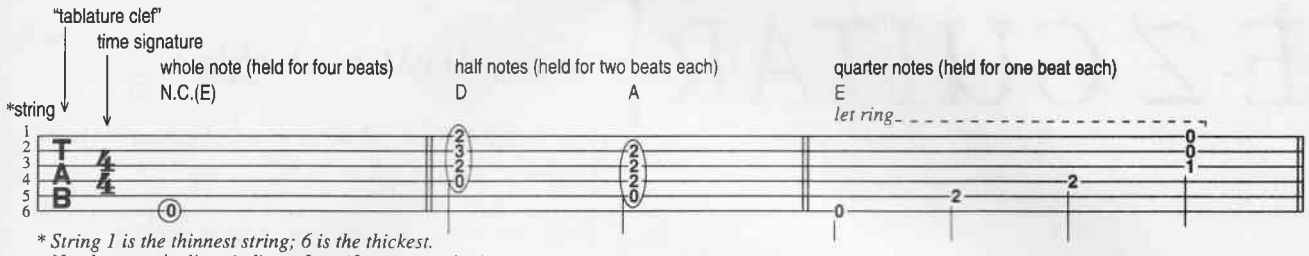
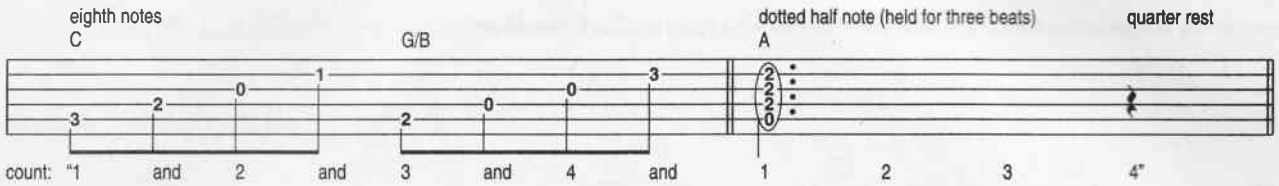
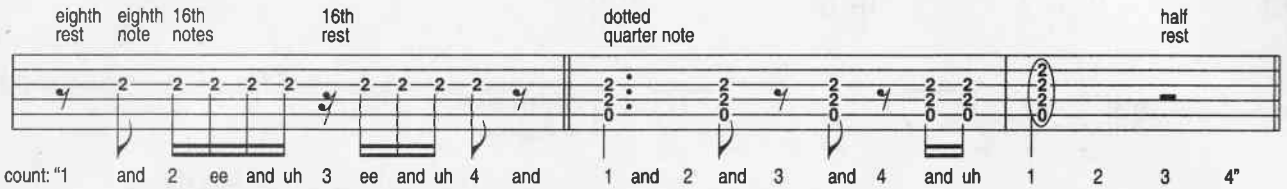
NOTATION GUIDE

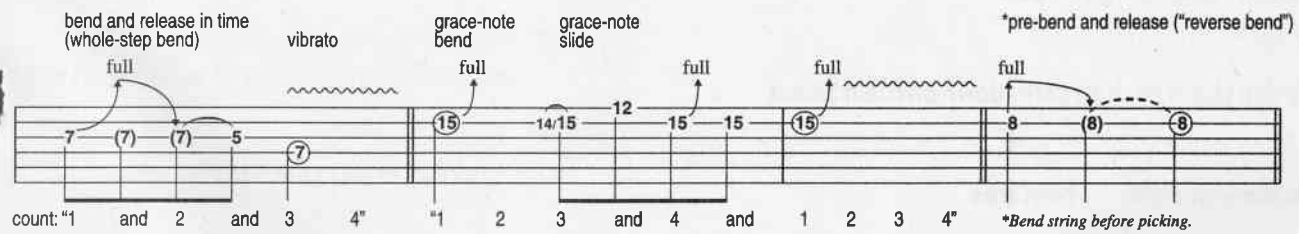


* *String 1 is the thinnest string; 6 is the thickest.*
Numbers on the lines indicate frets (0 = open string).




eighth rest
eighth note
16th notes
16th rest
dotted quarter note
half rest
count: "1 and 2 ee and uh 3 ee and uh 4 and 1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and uh 1 2 3 4"

* *Don't rearticulate notes in parentheses.*


bend and release in time (whole-step bend)
full
vibrato
grace-note bend
grace-note slide
*pre-bend and release ("reverse bend")
count: "1 and 2 and 3 4" "1 2 3 and 4 and 1 2 3 4"

* *Bend string before picking.*

* *Lightly touch string directly over fret, then pick.*

* *Harmonic sounded by picking hand.*

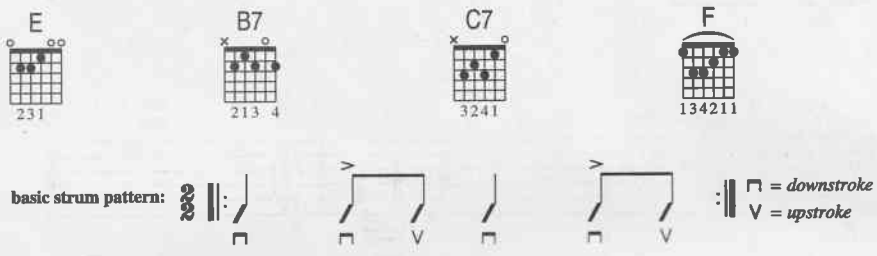
* *Loosen grip on strings so that they no longer touch the fretboard.*

* ⊓ = *downstroke*, ∨ = *upstroke*

{ E-Z GUITAR } *Arranged by Matt Scharfglass*

OKIE FROM MUSKOGEE Merle Haggard

As heard on the Sun recording *Okie From Muskogee* • By Merle Haggard and Roy Edward Burris



E
We don't smoke marijuana in Muskogee
B7
We don't take no trips on LSD
B7
We don't burn no draft cards down on Main Street
E
We like livin' right bein' free
E
We don't make no party out of lovin'
B7
We like holdin' hands and pitchin' woo
B7
We don't let our hair grow long and shaggy
E
like the hippies out in San Francisco do

chorus:

E

And I'm proud to be an Okie from Muskogee

B7

a place where even squares can have a ball

B7

We still wave Old Glory down at the courthouse

E C7

And white lightning's still the biggest thrill of all

F

Hey leather boots are still in style for manly footwear

C7

Beads and Roman sandals won't be seen

C7

Football is still the roughest thing on campus

F

and the kids there still respect the college dean

F

And I'm proud to be an Okie from Muskogee

C7

a place where even squares can have a ball

C7

We still wave Old Glory down at the courthouse

F

White lightning's still the biggest thrill of all

C7 F

And white lightning's still the biggest thrill of all

C7 F C7 F

in Muskogee Oklahoma U.S.A.

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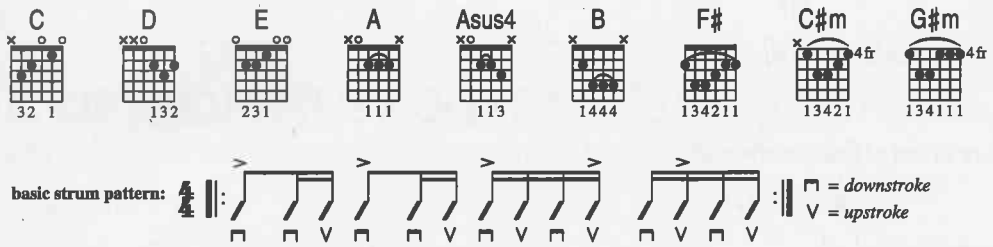
LOLA The Kinks

As heard on the Atlantic recording *Lola Versus Powerman and the Moneygoround, Part One* • By Ray Davies



E A D
I met her in a club down in old Soho where you drink champagne and it tastes just like cherry
E A Asus4 A
cola c-o-l-a cola
E A D
She walked up to me and she asked me to dance I asked her her name and in a dark brown voice she said
E A D
Lola L-o-l-a Lola Lo lo lo lo
C D E
Lola

E A D
Well I'm not the world's most physical guy but when she squeezed me tight she nearly broke my spine oh my
E A Asus4 A
Lola Lo lo lo lo Lola
E A D
Well I'm not dumb but I can't understand why she walked like a woman and talked like a man oh my
E A D
Lola Lo lo lo lo Lola Lo lo lo lo
C D E
Lola

B F♯
Well we drank champagne and danced all night under electric candlelight
A
She picked me up and sat me on her knee and said Dear boy won't you come home with me

E A D
Well I'm not the world's most passionate guy but when I looked in her eyes well I almost fell for my
E A D
Lola Lo lo lo lo Lola Lo lo lo lo
C D
Lola
E A D
Lola Lo lo lo lo Lola Lo lo lo lo
C D E
Lola

A C♯m B A C♯m B
I pushed her away I walked to the door
A C♯m B E G♯m C♯m B
I fell to the floor I got down on my knees Then I looked at her and she at me

E A D
Well that's the way that I want it to stay and I always want it to be that way for my
E A Asus4 A
Lola Lo lo lo lo Lola
E A D
Girls will be boys and boys will be girls It's a mixed up muddled up shook up world except for
E A
Lola Lo lo lo lo Lola

B F♯
Well I left home just the week before and I'd never ever kissed a woman before
A
but Lola smiled and took me by the hand and said Dear boy I'm gonna make you a man
E A D
Well I'm not the world's most masculine man but I know what I am and I'm glad I'm a man and so is

E A D C D
Lola Lo lo lo lo Lola Lo lo lo lo Lola *(repeat ad lib)*

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LOVE IN VAIN The Rolling Stones

As heard on the Abkco recording *Let It Bleed* • By Robert Johnson

w/capo at third fret

All chord shapes are relative to the capo.

All chords sound a minor third (three half steps) higher than written (key of B♭).

G G7
Well I followed her to the station with a suitcase in my hand
C D7/F♯
Yeah I followed her to the station with a suitcase in my hand
G D Gsus4 G
Well it's
D D/F♯
hard to tell it's hard to tell
Em7 C G7 D
when all your love's in vain

G G7
When the train come in the station I looked her in the eye
C D7/F♯
Well the train come in the station and I looked her in the eye
G D Gsus4 G
Whoa I
D D/F♯
felt so sad so lonesome
Em7 C G7 D
that I could not help but cry

(mandolin solo)

```
        G                                G7
When the train left the station                it had two lights on behind
        C                                D7/F♯
Yeah when the train had left the station       it had two lights on behind
        G              D          Gsus4          G
                                                    Whoa the
        D                                D/F♯
        blue   light   was   my   baby
        Em7            C          G7             D
           and the red light was          my mind
```

```
G                    G7
All    my love's     in vain
C                    D7/F♯
Oo                          hey hey
G          D         Gsus4          G

D                    D/F♯
Oo
Em7        C         G7             D
All    my love's     in vain
```

G7

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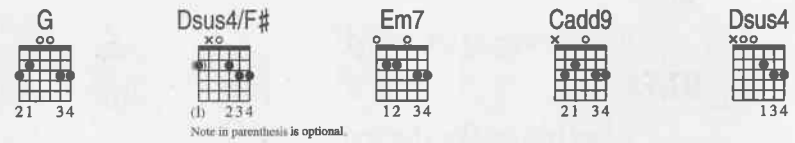
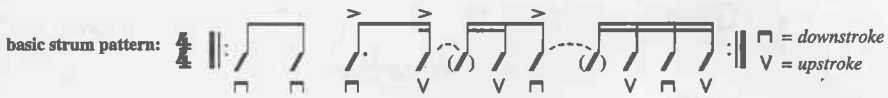
YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL James Blunt

As heard on the Atlantic recording *Back to Bedlam* • By Amanda Ghost, Sacha Skarbek and James Blount

w/capo at eighth fret
All chord shapes are relative to the capo.
All chords sound a minor sixth (four whole steps) higher than written (key of E♭).





G **Dsus4/F♯**
My life is brilliant My love is pure
Em7 **Cadd9**
I saw an angel of that I'm sure
G **Dsus4/F♯**
She smiled at me on the subway She was with another man
Em7
But I won't lose no sleep on that 'cause I've got a plan

1st chorus:

Cadd9 **Dsus4/F♯** **G**
You're beautiful you're beautiful
Cadd9 **Dsus4/F♯** **G**
You're beautiful it's true
Cadd9 **Dsus4/F♯** **G** **Dsus4/F♯**
I saw your face in a crowded
Em7 **Cadd9** **Dsus4/F♯**
place And I don't know what to do
Em7 **Cadd9** **Dsus4/F♯**
'cause I'll never be with you

G Dsus4/F♯
Yes she caught my eye as I walked on by
Em7 Cadd9
She could see from my face that I was fucking high
G Dsus4/F♯
And I don't think that I'll see her again but
Em7
we shared a moment that will last 'til the end

(1st chorus)

Cadd9 Em7 Cadd9 Em7
La la la la La la la la
Cadd9 Em7 Dsus4 Dsus4/F♯
La la la la la

Cadd9 Dsus4/F♯ G
You're beautiful you're beautiful
Cadd9 Dsus4/F♯ G
You're beautiful it's true
Cadd9 Dsus4/F♯ G Dsus4/F♯
There must be an angel with a smile on her face
Em7 Cadd9 Dsus4/F♯ G Dsus4/F♯
when she thought up that I should be with you
Em7 Cadd9 Dsus4/F♯
But it's time to face the truth
Em7 Cadd9 Dsus4/F♯ G
I will never be with you

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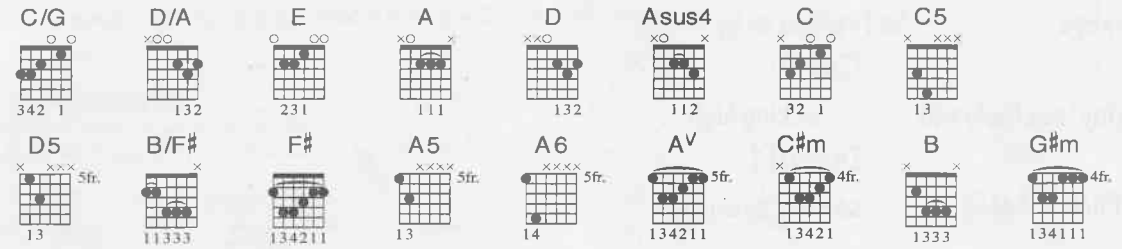
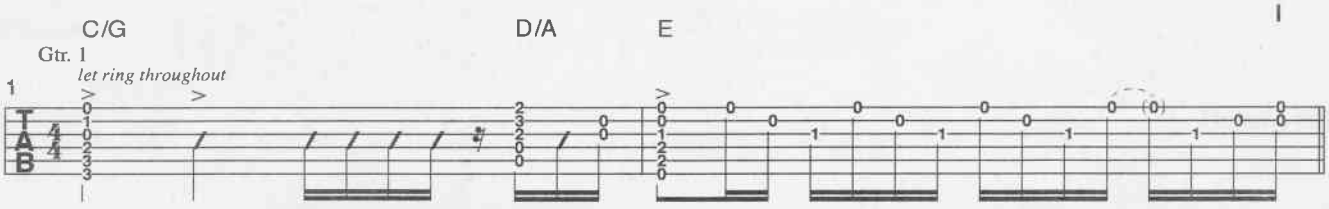
LOLA The Kinks

As heard on the Atlantic Recording *Lola Versus Powerman & The Moneygoround*
Words and Music by Ray Davies • Transcribed by Jeff Perrin

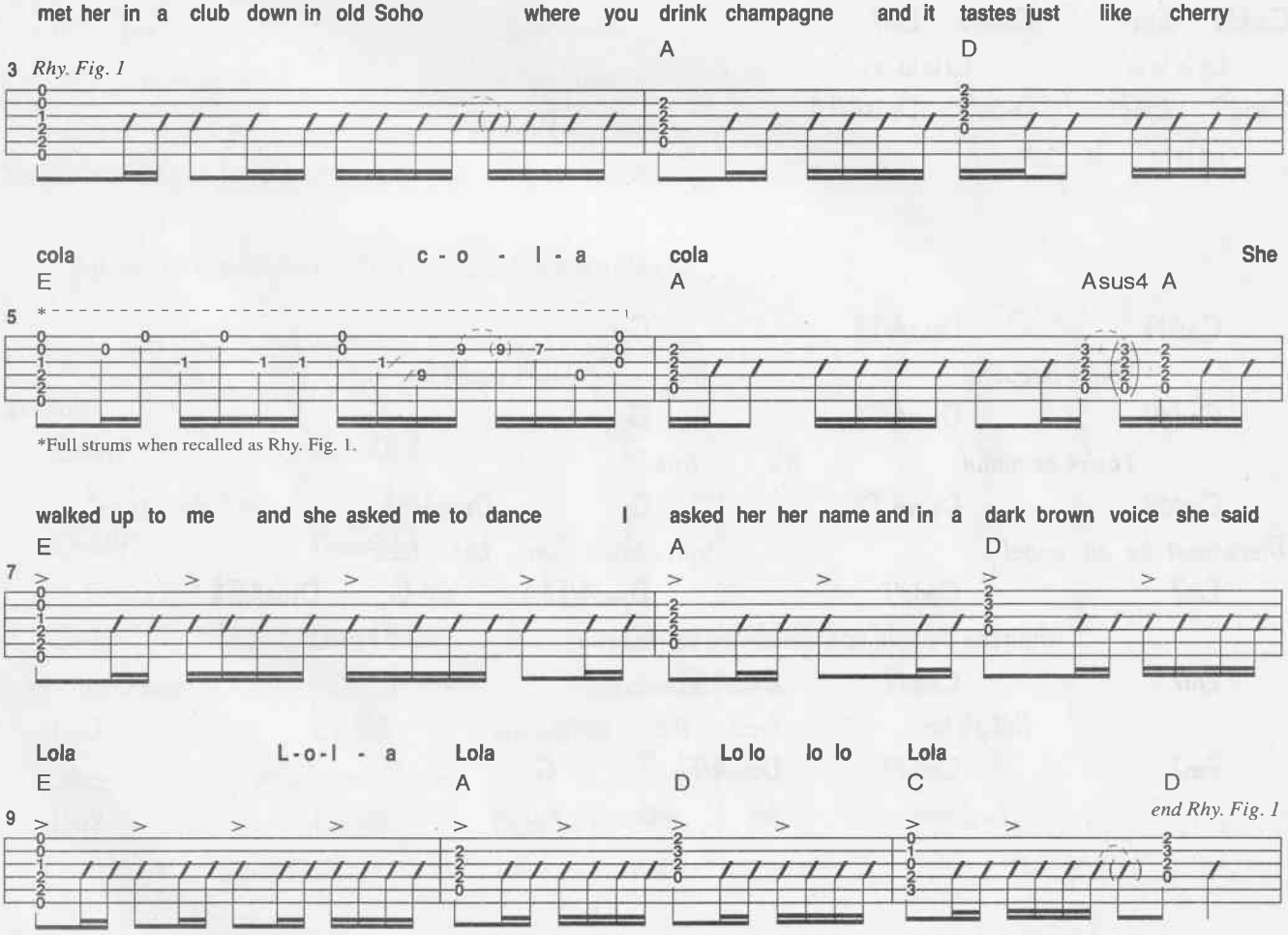


A **Intro** (0:00)

Moderately Slow ♩ = 76



B **1st Verse** (0:07)


met her in a club down in old Soho where you drink champagne and it tastes just like cherry
A
D
3
Rhy. Fig. 1
cola c - o - l - a cola She
E
A
Asus4 A
5
*Full strums when recalled as Rhy. Fig. 1.
walked up to me and she asked me to dance I asked her her name and in a dark brown voice she said
E
A
D
7
Lola L-o-l - a Lola Lo lo lo lo Lola
E
A
D
C
D
9
end Rhy. Fig. 1

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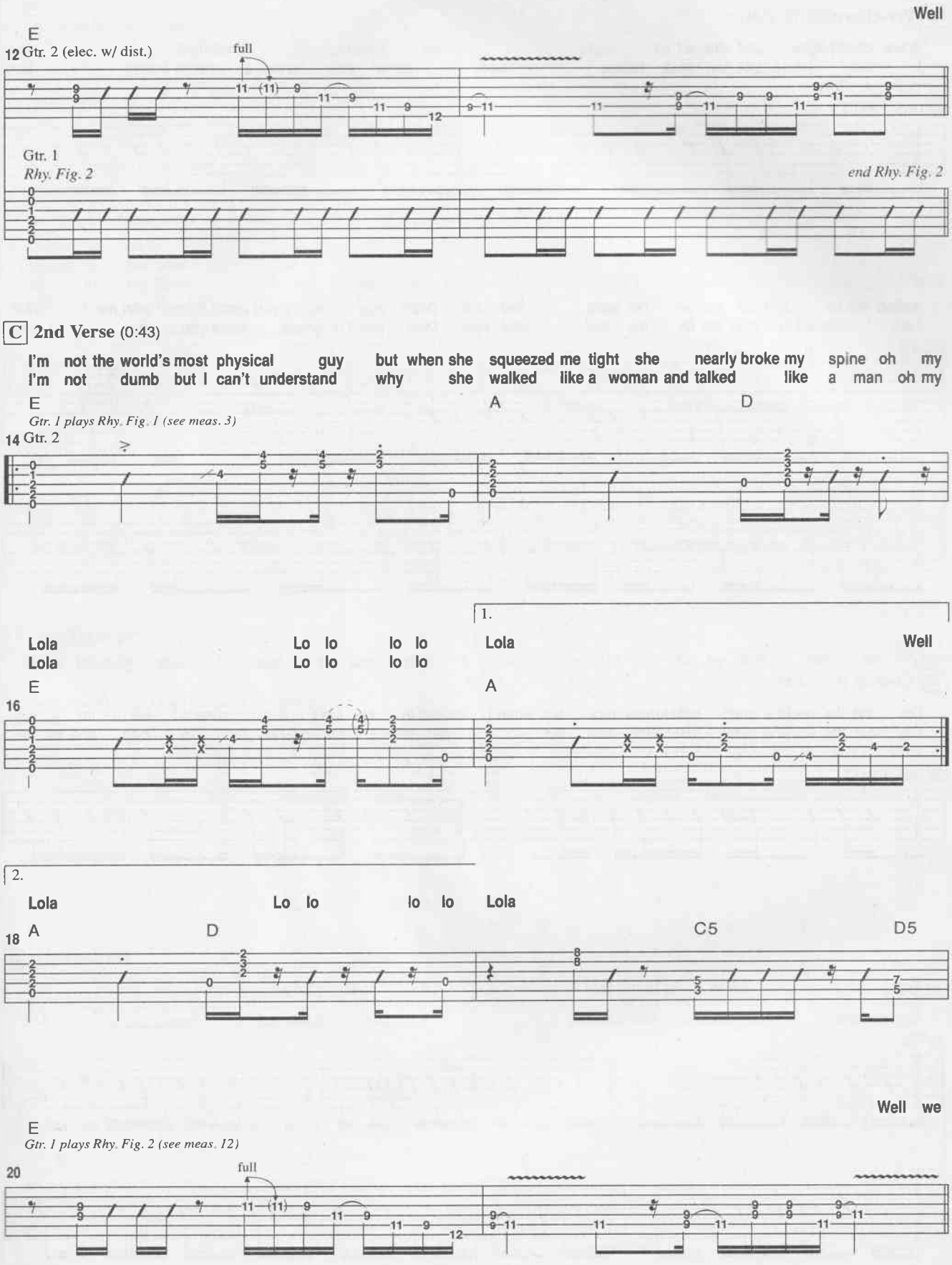


D **Pre-chorus** (1:18, 2:44)

drank champagne and danced all night under electric candlelight she
I left home just the week before and I'd never ever kissed a woman before but

B/F♯ F♯

22 Gtrs. 1 and 2

picked me up and sat me on her knee and said Dear boy won't you come home with me Well
Lola smiled and took me by the hand and said Dear boy I'm gonna make you a man Well

A5 A6 A^V

24 Gtr. 2

A
Gtr. 1

E **Chorus** (1:31, 2:56)

I'm not the world's most passionate guy but when I looked in her eyes well I almost fell for my
I'm not the world's most masculine man but I know what I am and I'm glad I'm a man and so is

E A D

26 Gtrs. 1 and 2

last time skip to **H**

Lola Lo lo lo lo Lola Lo lo lo lo Lola

E A D C5 D5

28 Gtr. 2

C D

Gtr. 1

LOLA The Kinks

E

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see meas. 12)

31 Gtr. 2

full

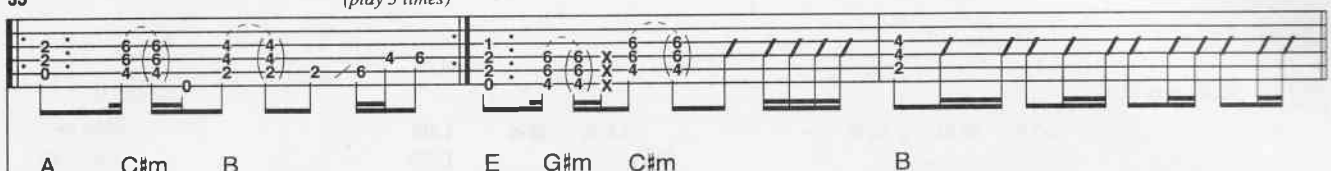
F Bridge (2:03)
(w/ double-time feel)

pushed her away I
walked to the door I
fell to the floor I got down on my knees Then I looked at her and she at me Well

A5 C♯5 B5 E G♯5 C♯5 B5

33 Gtr. 2

(play 3 times)



A C♯m B E G♯m C♯m B

Gtr. 1

G 3rd Verse (2:18)

that's the way that I want it to stay and I always want it to be that way for my

E A D

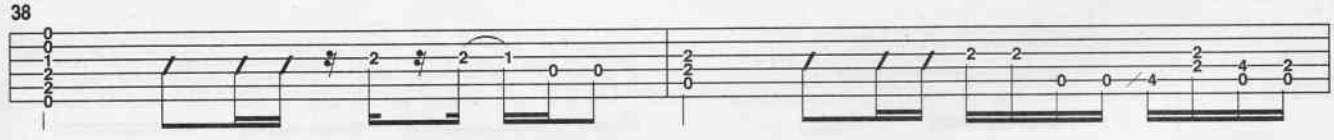
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (first six meas.) (see meas. 3)

36 Gtr. 2

Lola Lo lo lo lo Lola

E A

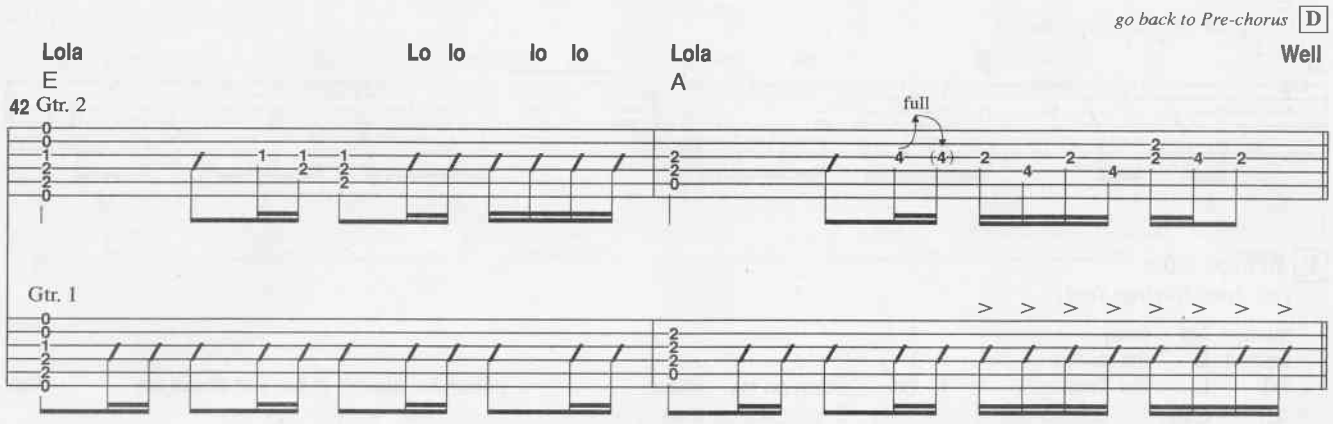
38



Girls will be boys and boys will be girls It's a mixed up muddled up shook up world except for

E A D

40



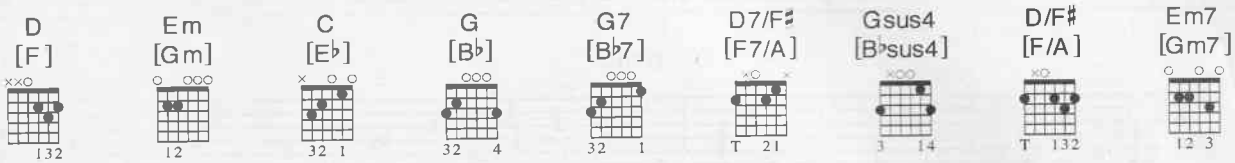
H Breakdown (3:12)

I Outro (3:21)

LOVE IN VAIN The Rolling Stones

As heard on the Abkco Recording *Let It Bleed*
Words and Music by Robert Johnson • Transcribed by Jeff Perrin

Chord shapes for Gtr. 1 (capo III)
All chord shapes and tabulature positions for Gtr. 1 are relative to the capo.
Bracketed symbols indicate sounding chords.



Gtr. 2 is in open G tuning:
(low to high) D-G-D-G-B-D

A **Intro** (0:00)

Slowly ♩. = 60

Well I followed

B **1st Verse** (0:18)

her **to the station**

with a suitcase **in my hand** **Yeah I**

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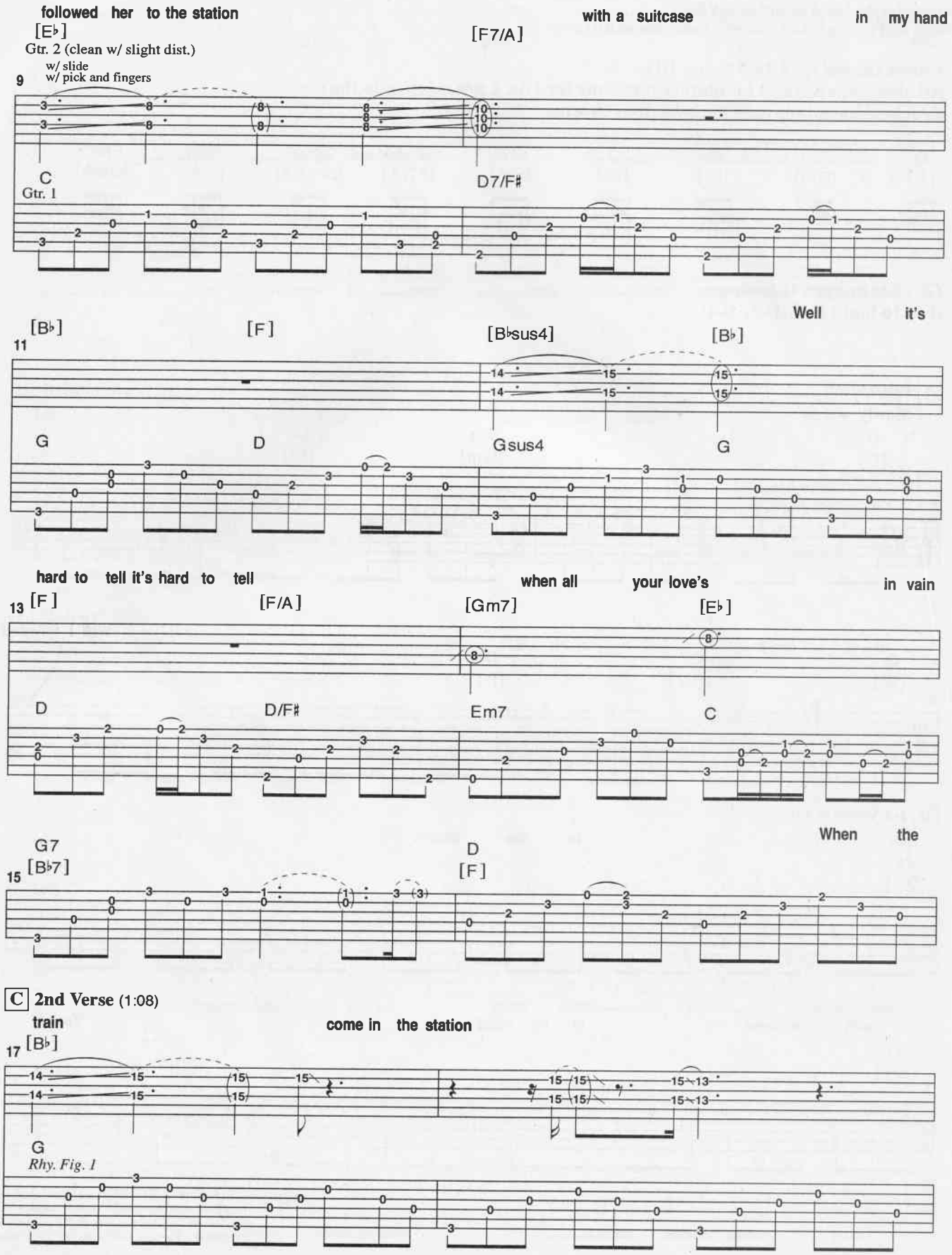
LOVE IN VAIN The Rolling Stones



LOVE IN VAIN The Rolling Stones

LOVE IN VAIN The Rolling Stones

D **Mandolin Solo** (1:56)

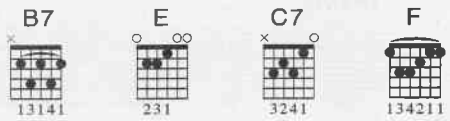
E **3rd Verse** (2:43)

train left the station it had two lights on behind
[B♭]
[B♭7]
41 Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (see meas. 17)
Yeah when the train had left the station
[E♭]
44

LOVE IN VAIN The Rolling Stones

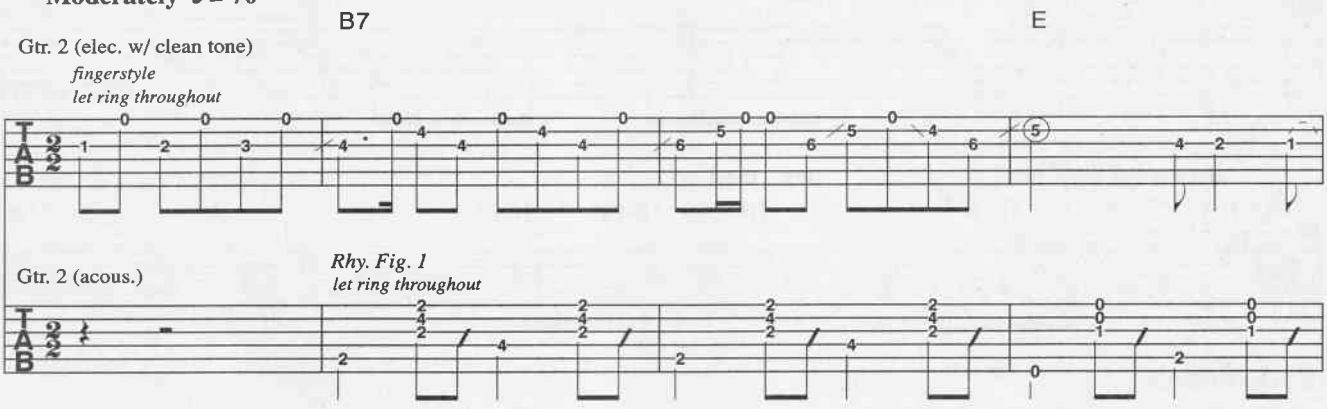
OKIE FROM MUSKOGEE Merle Haggard

As heard on the Sun Recording *Okie From Muskogee*
Words and Music Merle Haggard and Roy Edward Burris • Transcribed by Jeff Perrin



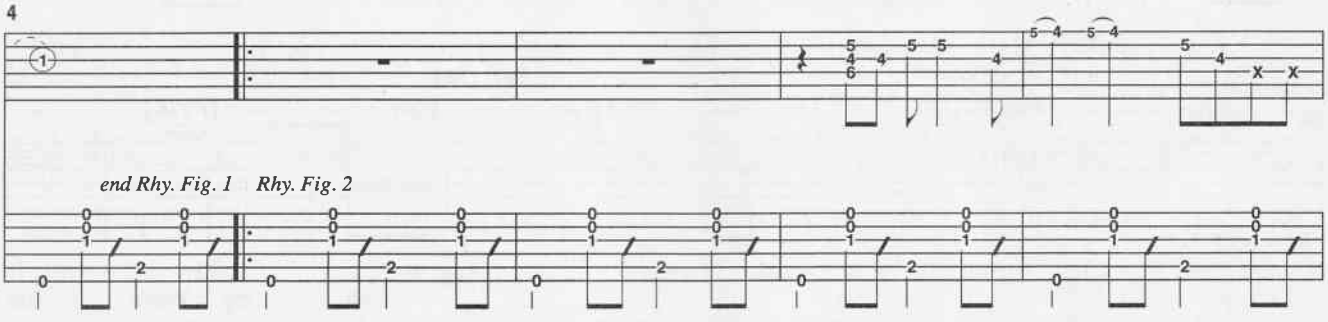
A Intro (0:00)

Moderately ♩ = 70



B 1st and 2nd Verses (0:08, 0:35)

1. We don't smoke marijuana in Muskogee
2. We don't make no party out of lovin'



We don't take no trips on LSD
We like holdin' hands and pitchin' woo

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OKIE FROM MUSKOGEE Merle Haggard

We don't burn no draft cards down on Main Street
We don't let our hair grow long and shaggy like the

13

We like livin' right bein' free
hippies out in San Francisco do And I'm

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (see meas. 1)

17 Gtr. 2

C **1st Chorus** (1:02)

proud to be an Okie from Muskogee a

21 *Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 (see meas. 5)*

place where even squares can have a ball

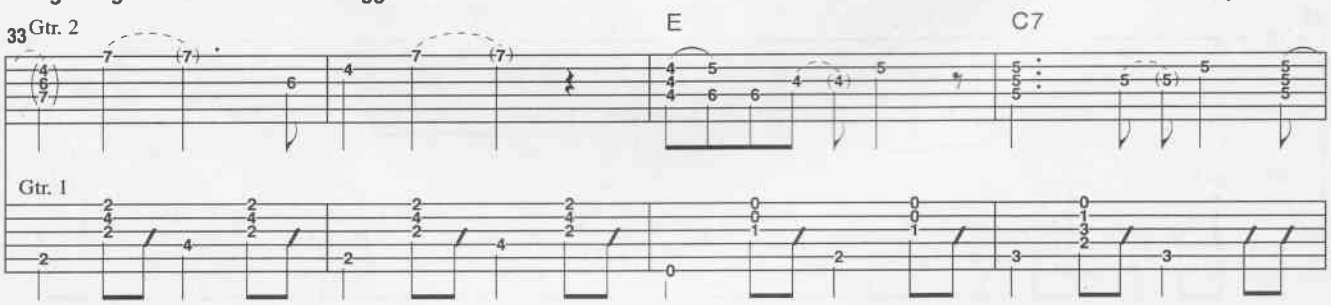
25

We still wave Old Glory down at the courthouse And white

29

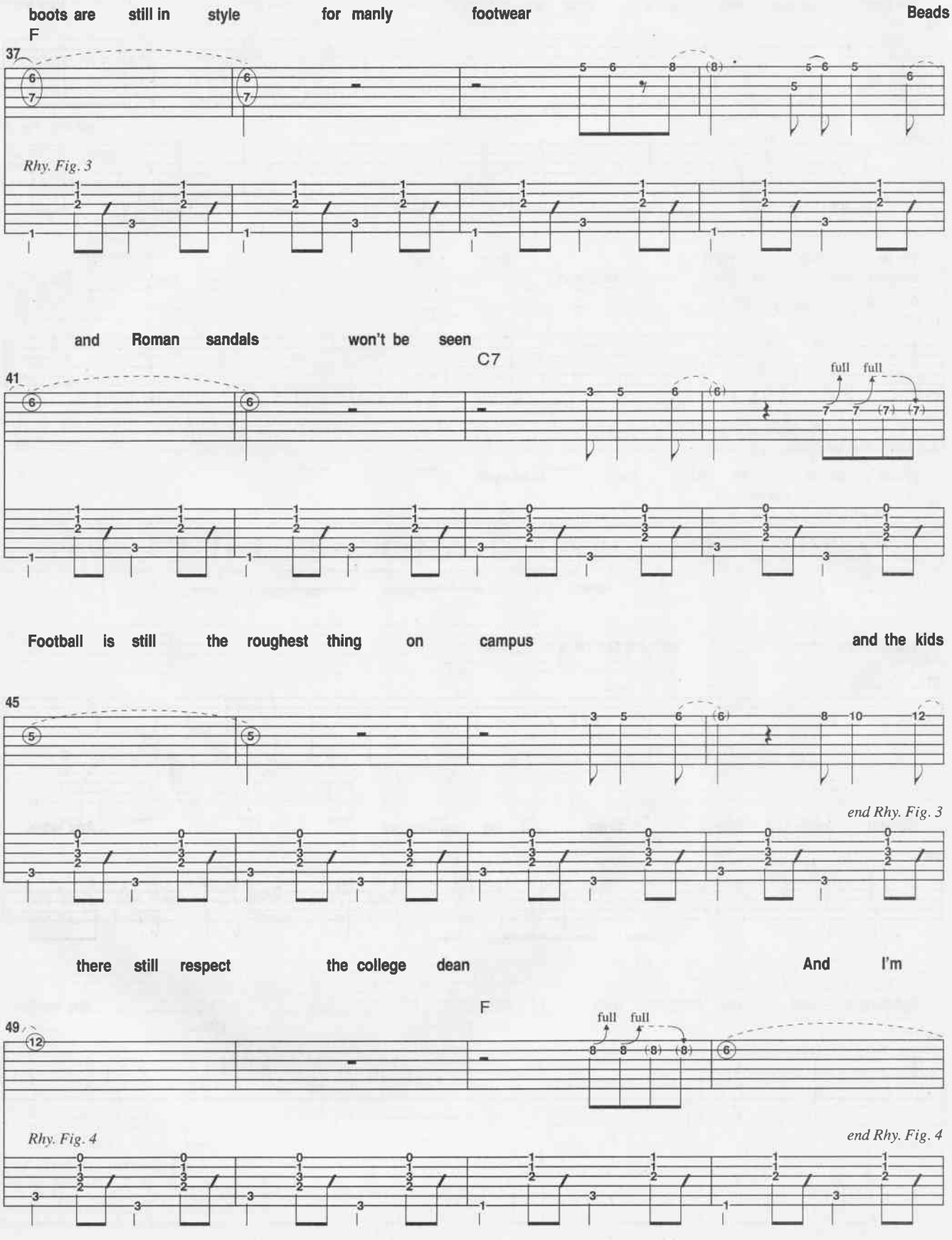
lightning's still the biggest thrill of all Hey leather

33 Gtr. 2



OKIE FROM MUSKOGEE Merle Haggard

D **3rd Verse** (1:29)



OKIE FROM MUSKOGEE Merle Haggard

E **3rd Chorus** (1:56)

proud to be an Okie from Muskogee a

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 (see meas. 37)

53 Gtr. 2

place where even squares can have a ball

C7

57

We still wave Old Glory down at the courthouse White

61

lightning's still the biggest thrill of all And white lightning's

F

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 4 twice (see meas. 49)

65

still the biggest thrill of all in Muskogee

C7 F

69

Oklahoma U.S.A.

C7 F C F

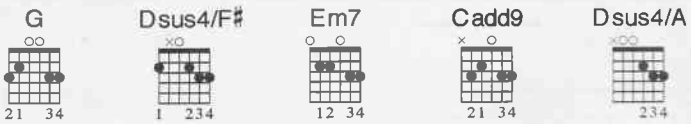
73 Gtr. 2

Gtr. 1

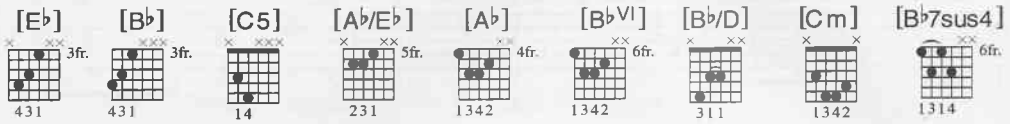
YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL James Blunt

As heard on the Atlantic Recording *Back to Bedlam*
Words and Music by Amanda Ghost, Sacha Skarbek and James Blount • Transcribed by Jeff Perrin

Gtr. 1 chords (capo VIII)
All chord and tabulature positions are relative to the capo.
All music sounds four steps higher than written.



Gtr. 2 chords (no capo)



A Intro (0:00)
Moderately slow ♩ = 80

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YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL James Blunt

[E♭] [B♭] [C5] [A♭/E♭]
G Dsus4/F♯ Em7 Cadd9

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (see meas. 1)
Gtr. 2 plays Riff A (see meas. 1)

5 Gtr. 3

My life is brilliant

2. Yes she caught

[E♭] [B♭] [C5] [A♭/E♭]
G Dsus4/F♯ Em7 Cadd9

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (see meas. 1)
Gtr. 2 plays Riff A (first meas. only) (see meas. 1)

9

B **Verses** (0:35, 1:38)

1. My life is brilliant — My love is pure
my eye — as I walked on by — She could

G Dsus4/F♯

13 *Gtr. 1

*Gtr. 1 tacet for 2nd Verse on recording.

I saw an angel — of that I'm sure — She smiled
see from my face that I was — fucking high — And I

Em7 Cadd9

15

at me on the subway — She was with another man — But I
don't think that I'll — see her again — but

[E♭] [B♭]

17 Gtr. 2

G Dsus4/F♯

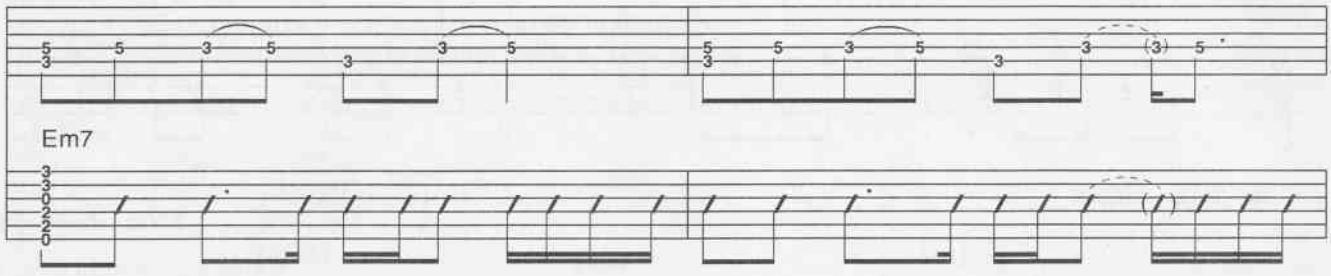
Gtr. 1

YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL James Blunt

won't lose no sleep on that 'cause I've got a plan
we shared a moment that will last till the end

[C5]

19

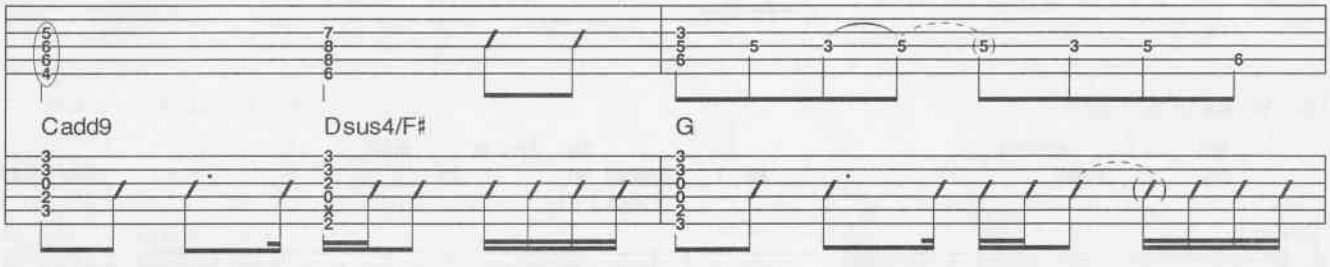


C **Chorus** (0:59, 2:01, 2:44)

(1.)(2.) You're beautiful you're beautiful
(3.) You're beautiful you're beautiful

[A♭] [B♭VI] [E♭]

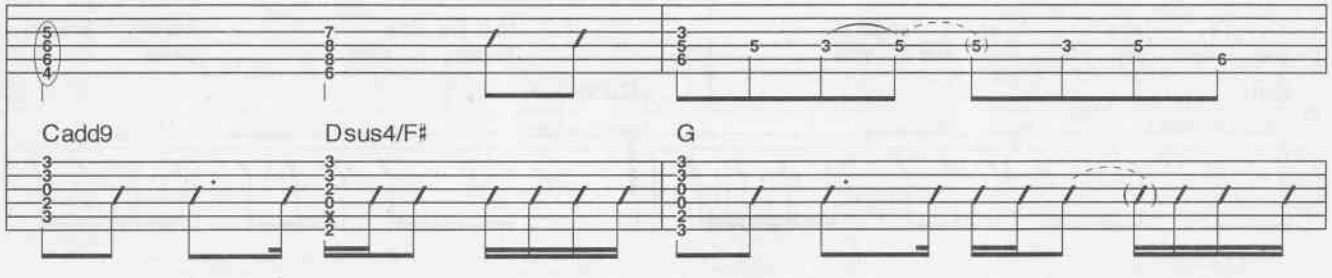
21 *(played on repeats only)*



You're beautiful it's true I saw
You're beautiful it's true There must

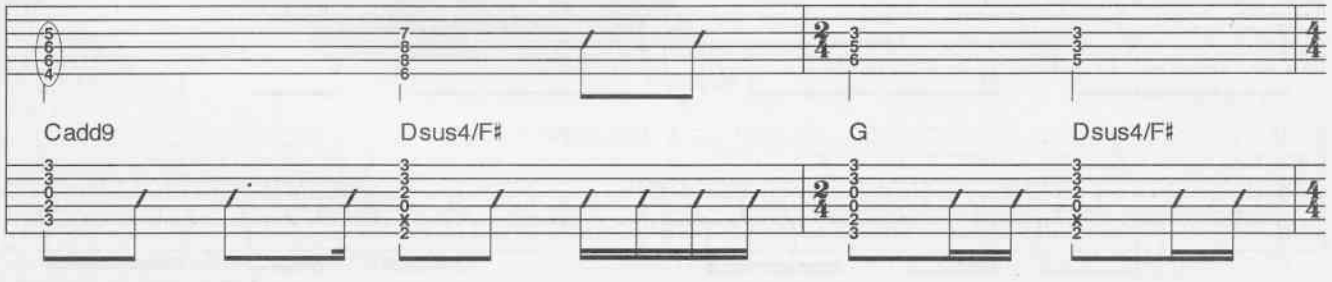
[A♭] [B♭VI] [E♭]

23



your face in a crowded place
be an angel with a smile on her face

25 [A♭] [B♭VI] [E♭] [B♭/D]

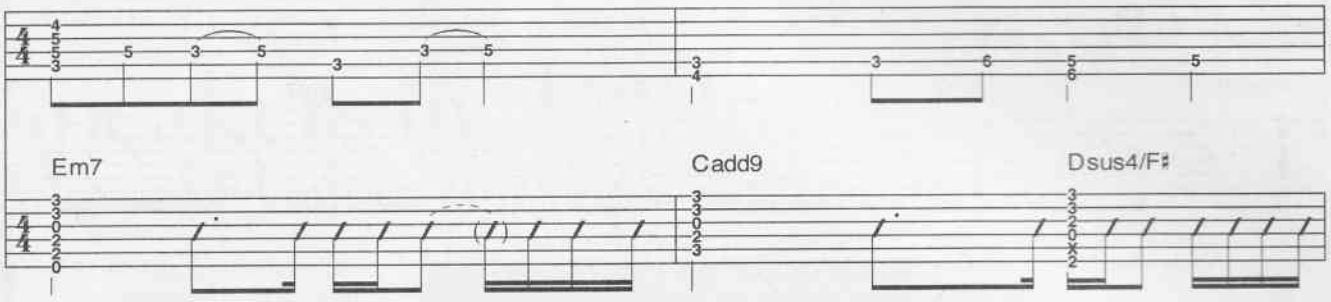


YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL James Blunt

(3rd time) skip to Outro **E**

And I don't know what to do
when she thought up that I should be with you

27 [Cm] [A♭] [B♭]

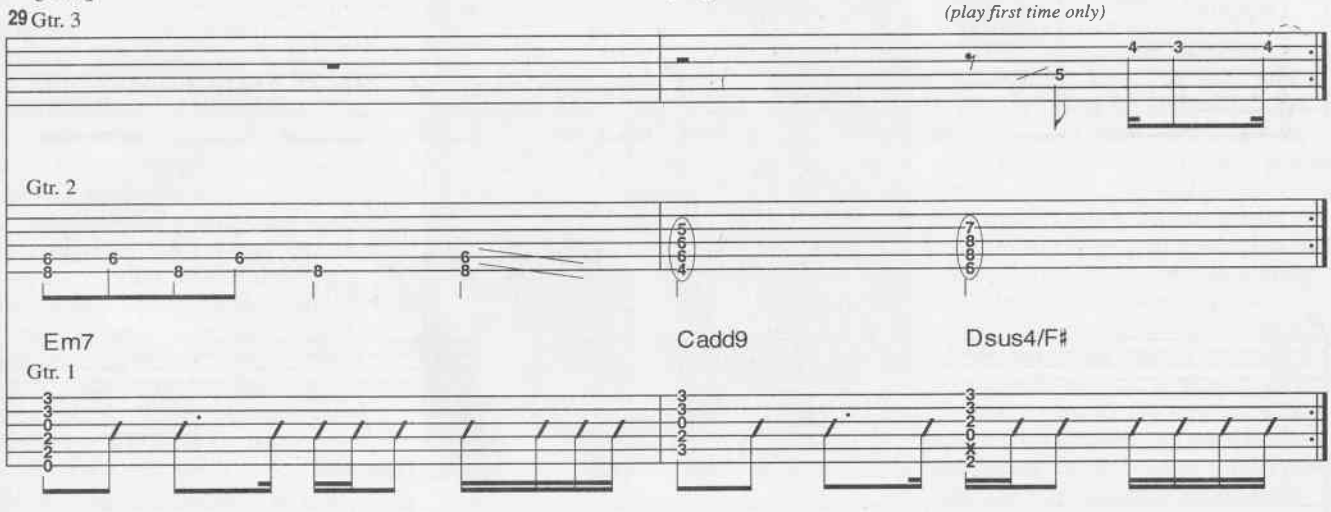


(1st time) go back to meas. 9

'cause I'll never be with you

[Cm] [A♭] [B♭VI]
(play first time only)

29 Gtr. 3

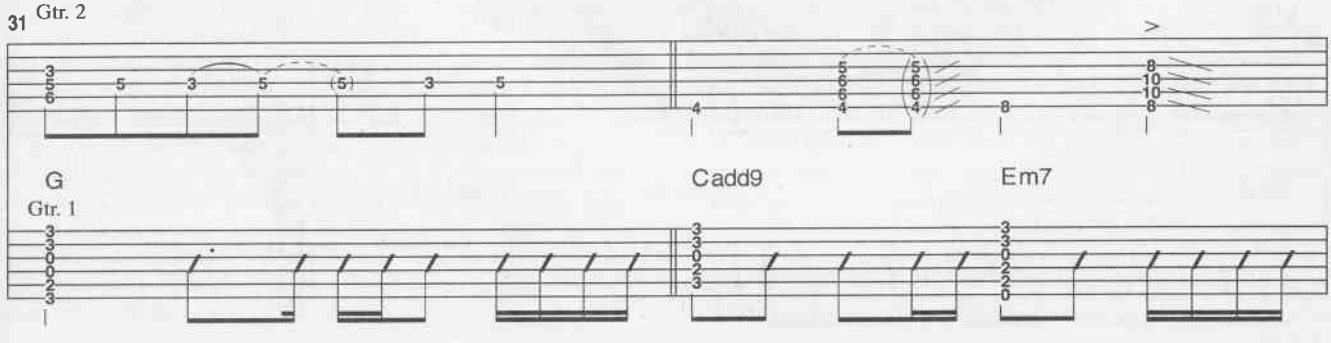


D **Bridge** (2:32)

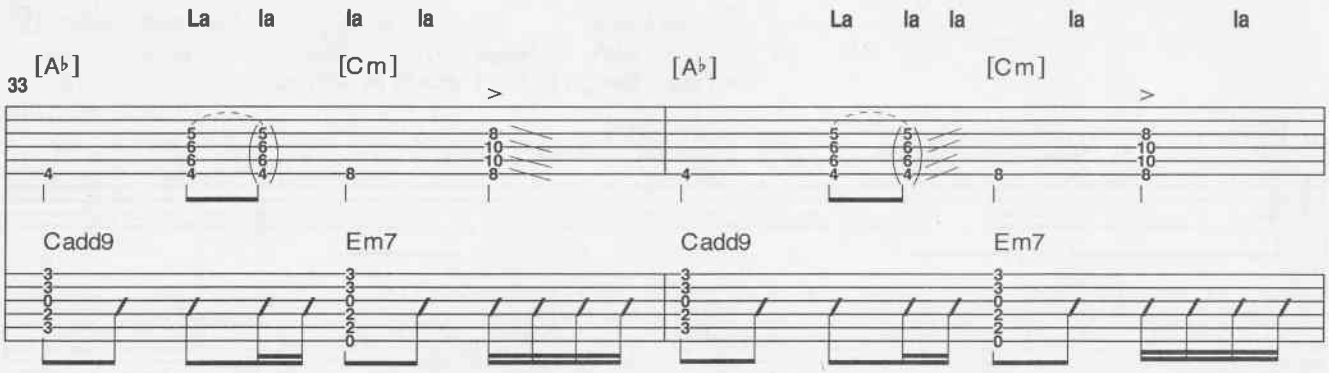
La la la la

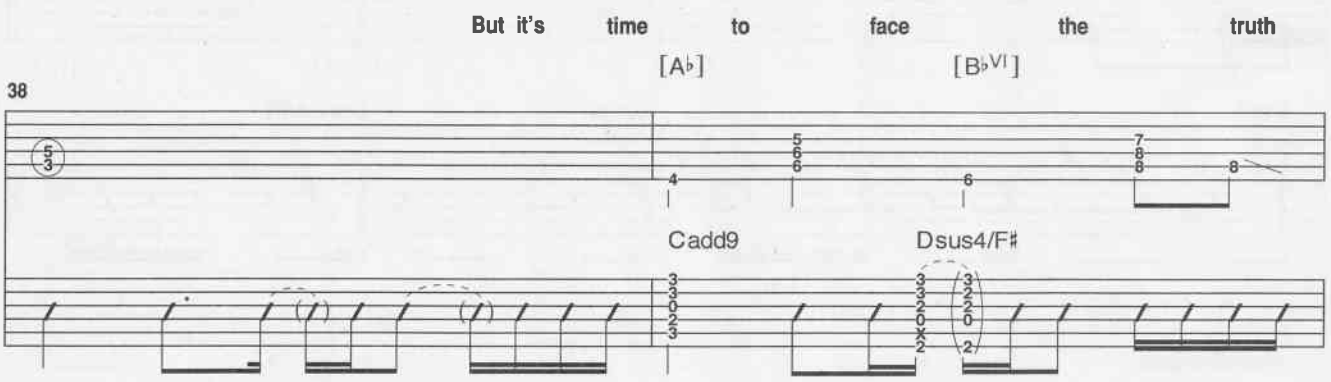
[E♭] [A♭] [Cm]

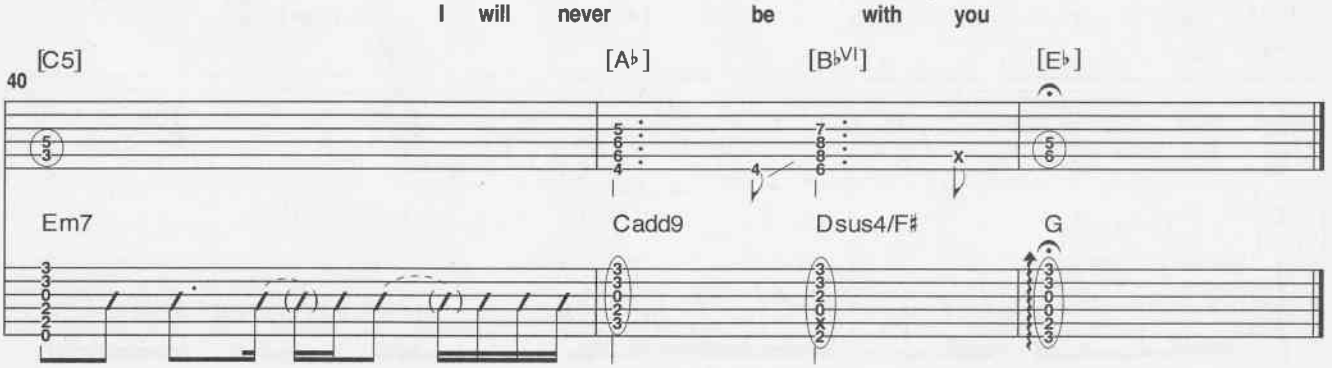
31 Gtr. 2



YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL James Blunt







Speakers in the House

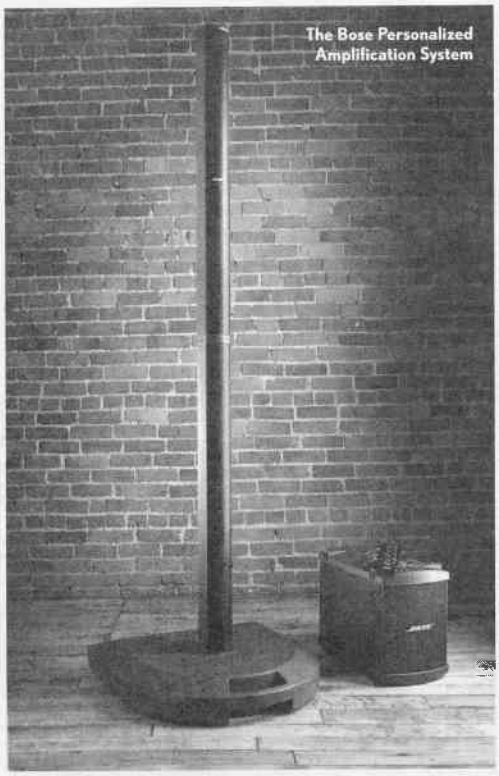
Amp and PA options for your acoustic guitar

LAST ISSUE, I spoke broadly about amps and loudspeakers for your acoustic guitar; now it's time to get more specific about the actual components. There are a number of approaches to getting your onstage acoustic sound right, and after becoming acquainted with these, you can choose to combine them to deal with a given circumstance. The main thing to go for is clarity and articulation; this will beat out pure sound pressure level any day of the week.

Very popular these days is the all-in-one combo acoustic amp, which combines a preamp stage that includes an EQ and perhaps even effects quite specific to the requirements of an acoustic guitar, a power amp and a wide-range speaker cabinet, often with a two- or even three-way driver setup. Most of these amps have at least one very high impedance input that can directly interface with a passive piezo pickup. This is perhaps not the best way to run a pickup, but common enough that amplifier manufacturers have had to allow for it.

If there's one piece of advice I can offer about combo acoustic amps, no matter what the design or feature set, it is this: Get it off the floor. This single act will improve the sound, get it closer to your ears and minimize feedback-inducing boom more than any knob tweaking ever will. The problem with having your amp down by your feet is that the woofer couples with the floor or stage, effectively doubling the bass frequencies right about where the top and air chamber tend to resonate. Also, with the amp down low, your guitar top is going to hear the sound more than your ears, and you will be tempted to turn it up too loud. So get that amp up on a stand, a chair or one of your bass player's speaker cabinets. Or, as a last resort, tilt it back. You'll be amazed at how this cleans up your sound.

The all-in-one combo is hardly your only option, however. Another way of going about things is to create the equivalent of an acoustic amp by using separate preamp and effects components, and perhaps a dedicated equalizer. I'm a big fan of this approach because it allows you to get your sound dialed in with your "front end" and then scale your power and loudspeaker requirements up and down depending on the size of the gig. I often advise players to cobble together a system in this fashion and fine tune everything to where what they get matches the sound of their guitar as it really is, unimpacted by loudspeaker and room issues. The trick then is to feed this through a good clean amp, monitor and PA, and to issue a stern warning to the sound mixer: "This is *my* sound, don't screw it up! If you need to EQ the speakers or the room, fine, but don't EQ my guitar."



The Bose Personalized Amplification System

Every preamp-based component system I've seen has one or more DI outputs that will drive a signal to the mains and monitor mixing boards, and what comes out there should be your sound. This does much to ensure that—assuming the PA is decent—you and no one else are in control of that sound. Which is as it should be.

If you take this approach, you may need to have a separate speaker system on the stage for your guitar, though acoustic-heavy bands like Crosby, Stills & Nash and the Eagles just run their guitars through the monitor speakers or into in-ear monitors; they perform without acoustic amps on stage. This means they avoid the problems associated with having any one sound come out of multiple locations onstage, such as phase issues, hot spots and general audio confusion. There is a great downside to crowding the stage with speakers in an attempt to get everybody to hear everything, because the phase cancellation coming from having multiple sources of the same sound leads to diminished articulation and sonic confusion.

Finally, we come to a very interesting acoustic amplification unit made by Bose, noted mostly for its consumer audio products. The manufacturer's "Personalized Amplification System," designed to serve as both a backline amp and monitor, as well as a personal PA (it works best with one instrument), consists of a "cylindrical radiator," a seven-foot tall column of tiny full range loudspeakers that is usually coupled with one or more subwoofers. With the Bose's column setup, everything from the upper bass to the high frequencies is very well controlled, with little of the drop-off associated with "point source" speaker cabinets. The vertical design ensures that you don't have to worry about "hot spots," and on top of everything else, the whole thing is remarkably feedback-resistant. The PAS represents an entirely new approach to amplification, and it might be for you—it sounds great.

Next time, I'll examine the best ways to employ EQ and effects when amplifying an acoustic guitar. ■

THE JAZZ BOX with John Pizzarelli

HEAR IT ONLINE AT guitarworld.com

"My Funny Valentine," Part II

The final 20 bars of the Rodgers & Hart classic

IN OUR LAST segment, we looked at the A section, or first 16 bars, of Richard Rodgers's beautiful "My Funny Valentine." I know you've been waiting anxiously to see the rest of the piece, so without further ado, let's look at the final 20 measures, the song's B and C sections.

As I noted in Part 1, you can fingerpick, hybrid-pick or flatpick this arrangement—all three approaches work. I prefer to hybrid-pick this one, but if you do opt to go with a flatpick, take care to mute the notes on the strings you don't play. For example, every time you play the Ab/Bb chord, arch your third finger so that it frets the sixth string and mutes the fifth string at the same time.

As you can see from the boatload of chord shapes illustrated above the tab, your fret hand has lots of advance work to do before you can tackle the real job: You must be fairly comfortable with the chords if you have any thought of mastering the arrangement. Your next challenge will be to bring the melody to the fore from amidst all those chords One way of doing so is to consciously add extra emphasis to each melody note, which in most cases is the highest pitch of each chord.

Now for the really hard part, which you've already encountered if you've worked on the first 16 bars of the arrangement—to get that melody to "sing" as you shift from one complex, discrete chord shape to the next. Let's isolate one section to give you a sense of what I'm talking about: In bar 1, after fretting the 11th-fret Bb with your second finger, you'll want to slide down and keep that digit depressed on the second string for as long as possible before playing the fourth-fret Eb melody note with your first finger. Then, so that everything sounds smoothly connected, keep your first finger held in place while you grab the rest of the Ab/Bb chord with your other fingers.

Strive for this economy of motion throughout. And if you're having trouble playing things evenly, you might start by just fingering all of the chord shapes while actually picking only the melody notes. 'Cause that's what it's all about—the melody. ■

MY FUNNY VALENTINE Words by LORENZ HART Music by RICHARD RODGERS Copyright © 1937 (Renewed) CHAPPELL & CO. Rights for Extended Renewal Term in U.S. controlled by WB MUSIC CORP. and WILLIAMSON MUSIC All Rights Reserved Used by Permission of Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

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Bossa Nova

Sexy, nylon-string accompaniment patterns from Brazil

BOSSA NOVA ("New Beat" or "New Thing" in Portuguese) is a smooth, seductive style created by Antonio Carlos Jobim, João Gilberto, Luis Bonfa, and other Brazilians in the late 1950's. These composers combined traditional Latin rhythms with harmonies borrowed from California cool jazzers like saxophonists Gerry Mulligan and Stan Getz. Bossa nova reached American shores with the 1962 release of *Jazz Samba* (Verve), featuring guitarist Charlie Byrd, and the style's popularity crested with Jobim's huge international hit, "The Girl from Ipanema." This and other songs such as "Desifinado," "Wave" and "Meditation," became pop-music classics and springboards for jazz improvisation.

A typical bossa accompaniment is played on a nylon-string guitar and features constant root-fifth bass movement. With a fifth-string-rooted voicing, this will require two slightly different chord grips. To play the fifth (G) of a C6/9 chord (**FIGURE 1a**), for instance, you have to move your second finger from the fifth-string C to the sixth-string G while leaving your other fingers in place. For **FIGURE 1a** and everything else in the lesson, use your thumb to pick each bass note, and your index, middle and ring fingers to grab the rest of the chord.

Next, learn the basic rhythm, sans bass notes (**FIGURE 1b**). Finally, combine the chords and bass notes (**FIGURE 1c**).

FIGURE 2 is a typical bossa progression, inspired by "The Girl From Ipanema." The rhythmic pattern of each two-bar phrase is identical, but note that the chords shift between bars 5-6 and bars 6-7 in the middle of the phrase. In each case, play the new bass note alone on the downbeat and then add the new chord on the upbeat.

In **FIGURE 3**, the same progression is transposed to the key of G. Here, since each voicing contains both the root and the fifth, you'll only have to use one grip per chord. If you begin to feel some cramping in your fretting hand, try applying a little less finger pressure; you can also switch to a lighter set of strings. Remember, bossa is all about being relaxed, sexy and seductive—you want to feel like a lover, not a fighter. ■

FIGURE 1a

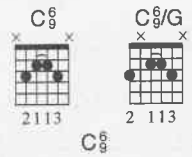


FIGURE 1b

FIGURE 1c

FIGURE 2

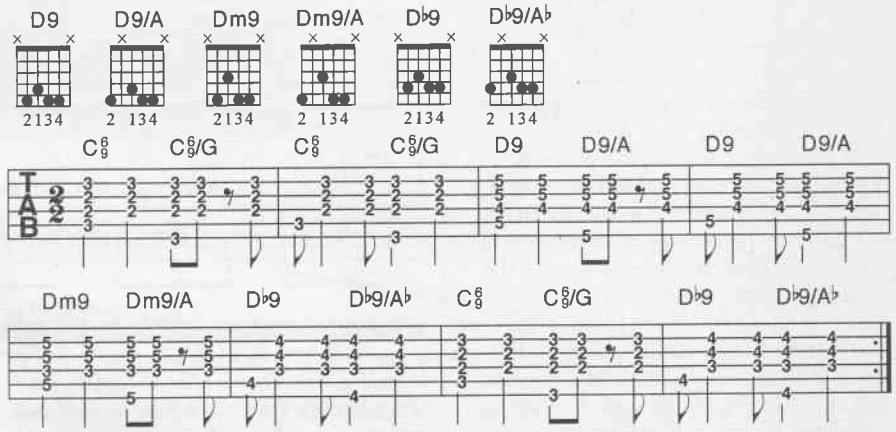
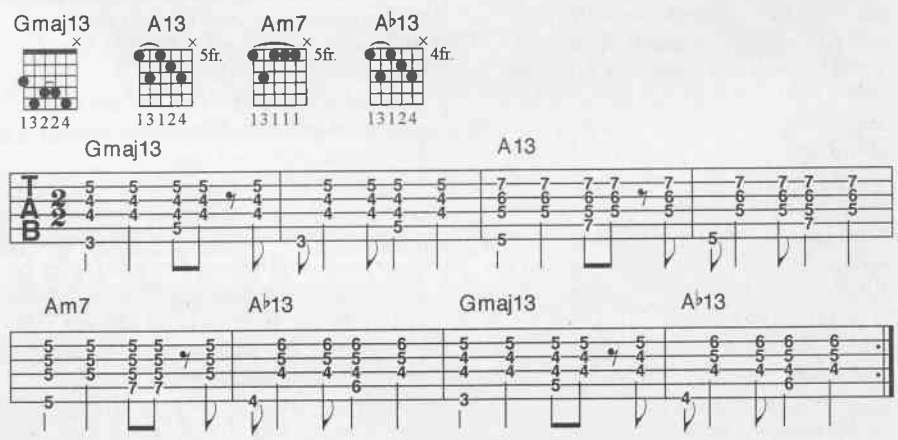


FIGURE 3



MAKE ROOM FOR DADGAD
with Laurence Juber

HEAR IT ONLINE AT guitarworld.com

A Break from Dear Old DAD
"Jesus Joy of Man's Desire," in open G

IN ARRANGING THE MAIN theme from what is one of Johann Sebastian Bach's most familiar pieces, I took a break from D A D G A D and tuned to open G (low to high: D G D G B D), a decision which not only facilitated playing "Jesus" in Bach's original key, but, due to the nature of the tuning, made it possible for me to "spread" the melody across multiple strings, generating harp-like sustain while enhancing the rich quality of the original chord progression. The time signature is 9/8—three groups of eighth-note triplets per bar. Before playing, set your metronome to around 60 bpm, and treat each click as one group of three eighth notes. Avoid the temptation to accent the first beat of each triplet: Feel the music as 1-2-3, 4-5-6, 7-8-9, not 1-2-3, 4-5-6, 7-8-9. Play everything in a flowing, even manner, and listen to the subtleties of the Baroque texture as the melody and harmony parts blend together.

I determined that a key to properly playing this piece, to successfully capture its unique flowing feel, was to concentrate on devising some especially efficient fingerings for the arrangement. Here are some of the most important: In measure 1, fret the D7/F# chord with your third and fourth fingers on the fourth and fifth strings, respectively. For the C/E chord, keep your third finger held in place, and fret the fifth and third strings with your second and first fingers.

At the beginning of measure 2, depress the sixth string's ninth fret with your second finger. Then, catch the second string's eighth fret with your first finger and the third string's 11th fret with your fourth finger to produce a ringing Gmaj7/B chord. Form the Em7 chord with your second finger on the fifth string and your first finger on the second string. On the third beat of measure 2, re-fret the fifth string with your third finger, and fret the fourth string with your first finger. Notice how the three adjacent scale tones—G, A, and B—are spread over the third, fourth, and second strings, respectively, creating a beautiful, harp-like effect.

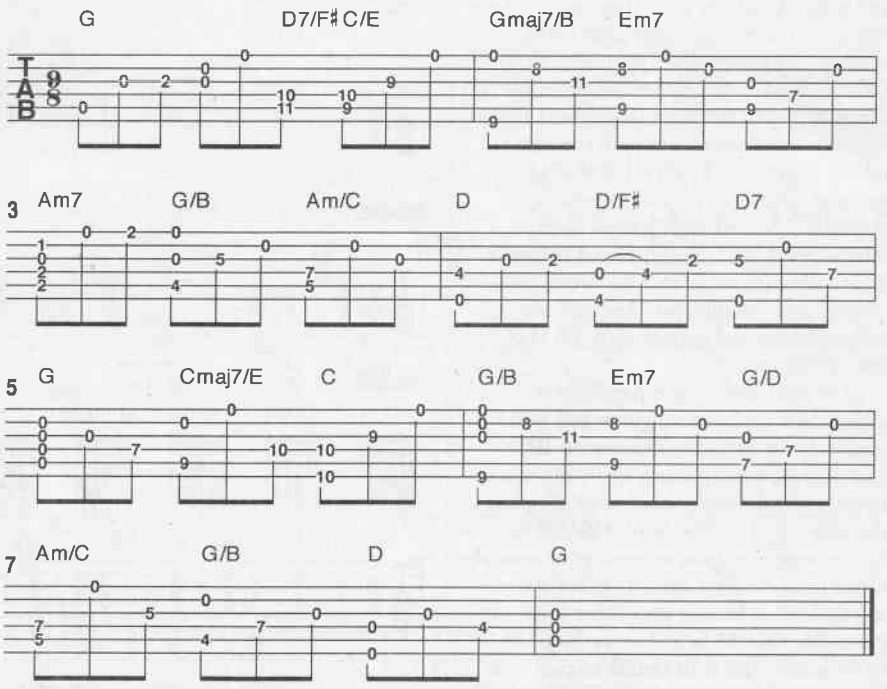
Measure 3 begins with a modern-sounding Am7 chord; I like to sustain the second-string C note as I play the next two melody notes, D and E. Fret the G/B chord with your first finger on the fifth string; while maintaining your hold on that note, add your second finger to the fifth fret of the third string. On the Am/C chord, move your index finger up a fret, and use either your third or fourth finger to depress the fourth string's seventh fret.

Measure 4 takes us to the almighty V chord, D. On the second beat, fret the sixth string with your third finger, use your fourth finger to execute the hammer-on, and play the second-fret A note with your first finger. Next, move your first finger up to the fifth fret, with your fourth finger staying close to the fourth string to fret the measure's final note, A.

As was the case in measure 1, open strings are utilized in measure 5 to form the melody, though the bass line diverges here. To set up the variations, depress the fourth string's seventh fret with your first finger. On the Cmaj7/E chord, use your third and fourth fingers to depress the ninth and tenth frets, respectively. Keep your fourth finger in place for the C chord, to which you'll add your third and second fingers on the appropriate strings.

Measure 6 is identical to measure 2, except for the G/D chord. In measure 7, use your first finger to fret both fifth-string notes, and keep your fourth finger on the fourth string's seventh fret until you move it to the fourth fret for the final note, F#. ■

"Jesus Joy of Man's Desire"
Open G tuning (low to high: D G D G B D)

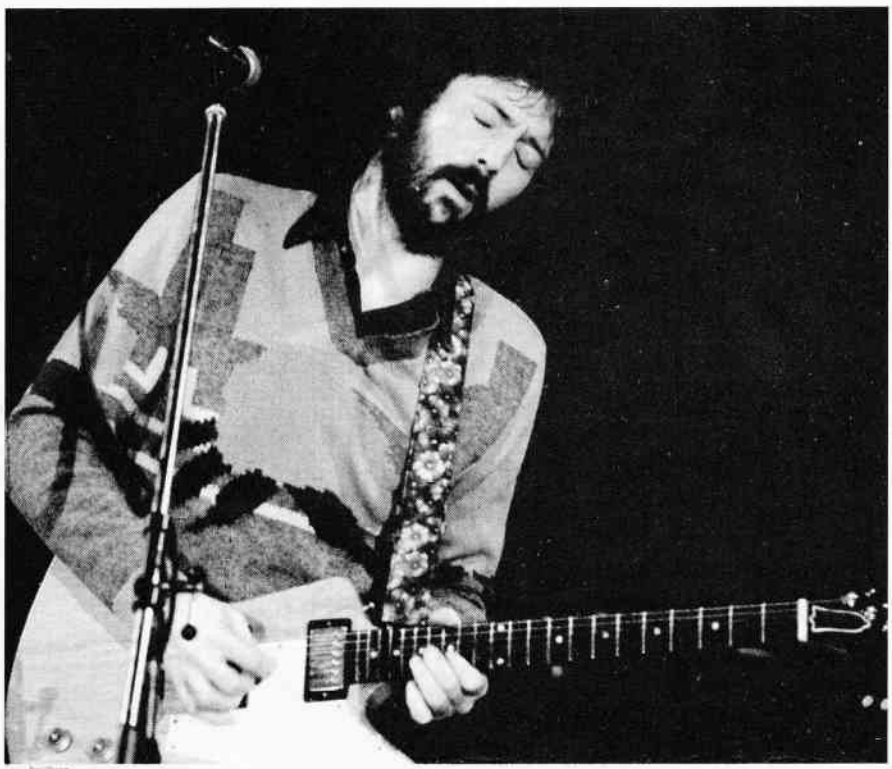


You can hear Laurence's complete arrangement of "Jesus Joy of Man's Desire" on Winter Guitar *(Solid Air). For the full transcription, see the* Contemporary Christmas Guitar *folio (Warner Bros.).*

HEAR IT ONLINE AT guitarworld.com

Tonight Show

A mellow arrangement of Eric Clapton's "Wonderful Tonight."



AS IS THE CASE with most of the arrangements that appear in "Unplugging," this acoustic guitar adaptation of Eric Clapton's "Wonderful Tonight" was devised to meet the needs of a working musician—my own. At solo gigs, I'm often pestered by intoxicated couples who want to slow dance to Clapton's ballad, and I finally decided to tackle the tune. I realized that I had to come up with a technically undemanding way to play the song's signature lead guitar melody and pretty chord progression at the same time.

FIGURE 1 depicts my take on the intro, for which I transposed Clapton's electric lead melody down an octave and then combined it with arpeggiated open chords, substituting grace-note hammer-ons, pull-offs and legato slides for the string bends in Clapton's original part. (On the original recording, the backing guitar chords are played as "closed" shapes by two clean electrics in the middle area of the neck.)

The best way to play the intro is with pick and fingers (hybrid picking), as you'll need to do some strumming during the verse. Play all the single notes with the flatpick and use the fingers to sound the higher strings when playing the chords. Or you could pick all of the melody notes with your fingers.

As for your fretting hand, be sure to use the fingerings indicated in the chord frames even if some strike you as a bit out of the ordinary, as to make it easier to play the melody notes and move from chord to chord. As you form the grips, take care not to accidentally mute any of the notes with your fretting hand. Finally, notice that a few of the melody notes are anticipated rhythmically, falling a 16th note prior to the downbeat; allow each one to ring out through the following beat.

As illustrated in **FIGURE 2**, strum full chords behind the verse, as this serves not only to drive the accompaniment but also makes for a nice textural contrast with the hybrid-picked intro. For the sake of a fuller sound, I've chosen to play the C and D chords with their respective fifths, G and A, in the bass. To convey a flowing pulse and capture the laidback feel of Clapton's rhythm section, use 16th-note pendulum strumming when playing **FIGURE 2**. This involves moving your picking hand in a constant down-up motion, playing those chords that fall on the first or third 16th note of the beat—including any quarter notes or eighth notes—with a downstroke and those that fall on the second or fourth 16th note with an upstroke. Execute the hammer-on/pull-off move in bars 2 and 3 with your fourth finger on the first string's third fret. Also, after playing the Em chord in bar 5, relax your second finger's grip on the fifth string without actually removing it; this will ensure that when strumming the ensuing Em/D chord, you won't accidentally sound the open A note—a note that isn't part of the chord.

The first verse is followed by a reprise of the last two bars of the intro (see **FIGURE 1**). This leads into the second verse, for which you repeat **FIGURE 2** and add the one-bar extension shown in **FIGURE 3**. As indicated in the chord frames, anchor your second finger on the sixth-string G throughout while playing the ascending line on the D string, letting everything ring as you go.

FIGURE 3 sets up the bridge, which is identical to the last three bars of the verse (**FIGURE 2**, measures 4-6) and is capped off with a bar, shown in **FIGURE 4**, that ends on the V (five) chord, D. To create a bit of drama here, strum more loudly than you do when playing the verse.

The bridge is followed by a complete restatement of the intro (**FIGURE 1**), then a third and final verse (**FIGURE 2**) in which the last two bars are *tagged*, or repeated. The arrangement of "Wonderful Tonight" concludes with yet another restatement of the intro, but with the last three chords—Em, D9/F♯ and G—played *ritard*, i.e., with an increasingly slower tempo. For that final G chord, use the "folk" voicing illustrated in **FIGURE 5**, emphasizing the same high-G note played by Clapton's lead guitar on the original recording. ■

CHRIS WALTER/WIREIMAGE

"Wonderful Tonight"

FIGURE 1 intro

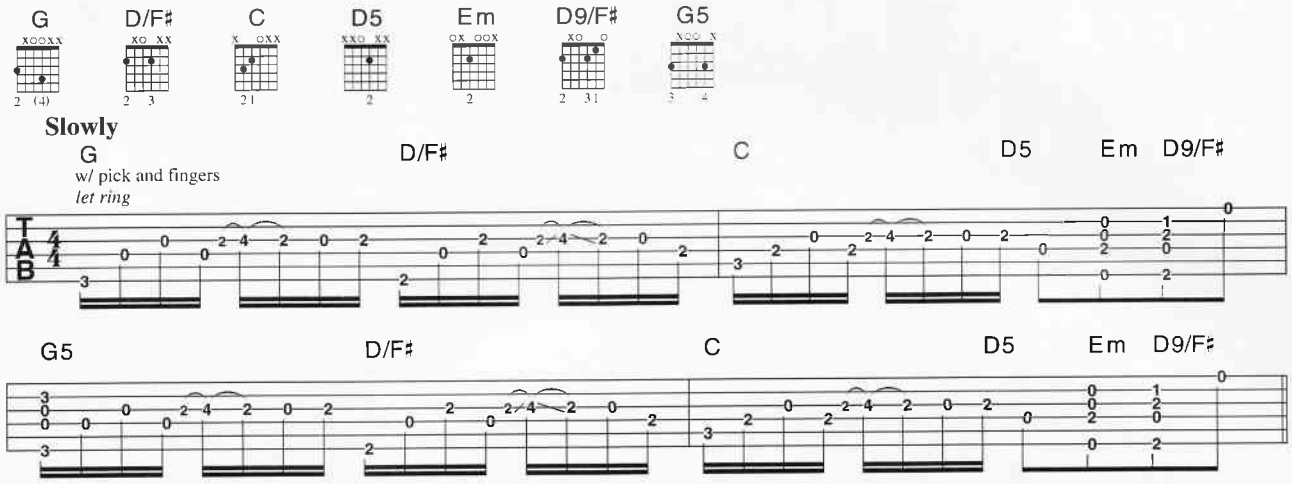


FIGURE 2 verse

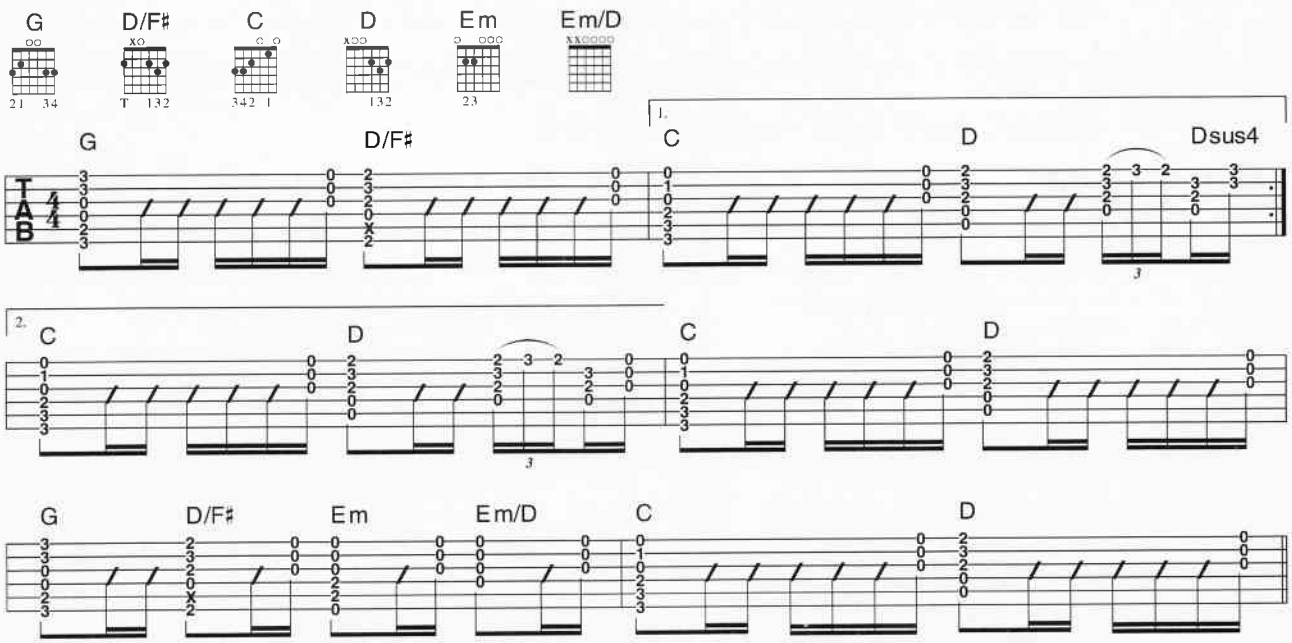


FIGURE 3 last bar of second verse

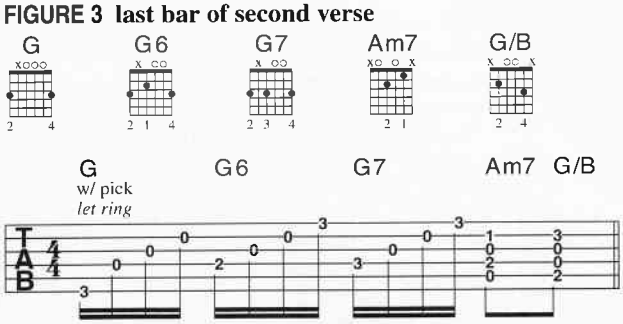


FIGURE 4 last bar of bridge

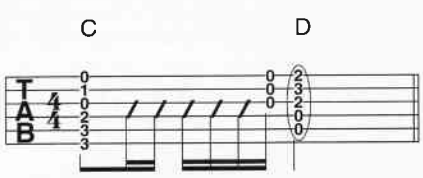
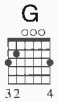


FIGURE 5 ending chord



WONDERFUL TONIGHT Words and Music by Eric Clapton Copyright © 1977 by Eric Patrick Clapton All Rights for the U.S. Administered by Unichappell Music Inc.International Copyright SecuredAll Rights Reserved Reprinted by Permission of Hal Leonard Corporation

NEKO CASE (continued from page 22)

National resonator model, and a few other acoustics. Plus some electrics, too.

GWA Electric tenor guitars? Those must be pretty rare items.

CASE Yeah, I never thought I'd find one electric tenor, but now I have three. The first one I got was a '59 Gretsch Tenor Jet. It's my special buddy, but I don't take it on the road anymore, because American Airlines smashed the bridge and I will never forgive them for it. If you're a musician, the airlines are your enemy—they just treat you like shit. They won't even let you gate-check your guitar, but if you've got a stroller, no problem. I'm tired of being punished for playing music and not having any children.

GWA How do you amplify the tenors?

CASE I've got a Carr Rambler, which I also use to play my acoustic guitars through. I use my monitors really loud for vocals, and the pickups began "picking up" the sound. Especially with the Martin. My other tenors all have B-Band pickups in them, but the pickup in the Martin is something else—I'm not sure what—and it's really hot, so it didn't enjoy getting my vocal.

GWA What six-string acoustics are you using these days?

CASE A Gibson Hummingbird that I take on tour, and an Epiphone Texan that isn't as chimey as the Gibson; both are from 1960. I've got old-fashioned DeArmond soundhole pickups in both of them.

GWA Who's your all-time favorite guitarist?

CASE Actually, it's a six-string player who mostly played electric. Pops Staples, because he really respected the instrument. That sounds so pretentious and lame, but what I mean is that he wasn't all about solos. He concentrated on being sparse with his notes, and he knew how to arrange simply for the greatest emotional impact. My whole life, I've heard people praising these guitarists who noodle all over the place. Like Eric Clapton—who, in my opinion, has the worst guitar sound of all time. In fact, I used to see Eric Clapton as the beast at the gate who wouldn't let the ladies in. He really isn't, but that was what I felt. Pops Staples was around first, and he's the guy that guitarists like Clapton wish they could sound and play like. His tone makes me cry.

GWA Any contemporary players have that impact on you?

CASE You know who else has that quality? Chan Marshall of Cat Power. But no one ever gives her the credit for that. She does these beautiful sparse melodies, and MTV's always using them for commercials and whatnot, but nobody talks about how great her guitar playing is. Because, for some reason, in America it isn't great unless there's a shitload of notes. I don't understand that. America, land of notes. ■

JACK JOHNSON (continued from page 28)

is that the idea of being put on the spot and having someone say, "Can you write a song for this?" still makes me nervous.

GWA So you don't see yourself as the next King of Tin Pan Alley.

JOHNSON No.

GWA Considering your anxiety about doing this sort of thing, I'm surprised that you were so eager to take on *Curious George*.

JOHNSON What really gave me the will to do it was the fact that my wife and I had just had a kid when I got approached with the offer. It got me really excited, because I thought, "This is perfect, a children's film—it'll be something I'll do during the first couple of years of his life." My kid was in the studio the whole time—not just him but also my brother's kids and all their friends. We told everybody, "Bring as many of 'em as you can," because the last thing I wanted to do was sit in there slaving over some record that wouldn't even connect with children. So kids were there all the time, listening and dancing in the control room.

GWA What guitars did you use on the album?

JOHNSON A Gibson J-45 from 1975, the year I was born, that I got last summer at Matt Umanov's guitar shop in New York, and a Maton, an Australian guitar. That's the one I used a lot on *On and On* and *In Between Dreams*. It's been everywhere with me, though it got crushed on an airplane one time and I had to have somebody fix it up for me. That's the reason I don't like to get too attached to guitars.

GWA I hate to put you on the spot, but were you a *Curious George* fan growing up?

JOHNSON Yeah, I was, as much as your average kid. My mom read me a lot of the books. It's not like I was a total fanatic, but I remember all the stories and a lot of the images.

GWA This may strike you as a bit odd, but is it possible that you, who came from a beautiful and relatively remote place like Hawaii to make your name on the mainland, see a little bit of Curious George in yourself?

JOHNSON It's funny to admit it, but I think you have something there. Where I grew up in Hawaii was very rural, and until I was a little kid we didn't have TV out there—we couldn't get cable—and the furthest I could drive was an hour across the island.

When I moved to California it felt like I'd entered a wonderland. It was the same feeling Curious George had when he got to the big city. The sense of how big the world really is. ■

NICKELBACK (continued from page 33)

you've got ZZ Top's Billy Gibbons chiming in on the vocals...

KROEGER Yeah, Billy sounds like the devil! [*laughs*] He played the guitar solo on "Follow You Home," and then we were like, "You've gotta hear this other song!" He just absolutely fell in love with it, and he came up with all these spoken lines, like "I'll have the quesadilla!" Just classic! I know so many people that just absolutely love that song, my mother included. I think it would be a shame if it wasn't released as a single; I'm definitely pushing to put it out.

GWA In past conversations, Ryan has told me that he's a big country music fan. Are you a country guy too, Chad?

KROEGER I do love country, but we differ in that where Ryan loves the old stuff, I'm a big, big fan of Keith Urban, who I think is a great guitar player, and I love Alison Krauss. She's got some great fucking players in her band. Anybody who's made a name for himself in Nashville is a serious player. Those Nashville guys, man, they're so incredible, so clean, so fluid—no string noises when they change chords! And I'm really starting to appreciate that. This is like our ongoing joke—first you get to the top of your game in rock, and *then* you learn how to play country. All those Nashville session guys are like, "Yngwie Malmsteen? Eddie Van Halen? Yeah, I did all that years ago. Now I play country!" [*laughs*]

PEAKE Actually, "Someone That You're With," on the new album, was meant to be acoustic, but it sounded too country when we were done with it. We were like, "We've gotta go somewhere else with this." So we wound up putting an electric with a tube driver over it. It could have easily been a country song, but we just weren't quite ready to make that jump.

KROEGER I do think that "Photograph" could get played on Country Music Television in a heartbeat, though. It's definitely got a country vibe to it, and I think its popularity has something to do with that—it doesn't really plunk itself into any particular style or format; it's kind of all over the place, so you can't nail it down. And those are the kind of songs that reach the most people. I got a call a couple of weeks ago from [former Pantera drummer] Vinnie Paul. He was at the Clubhouse, his strip club in Dallas, and "Photograph" was just blaring in the background. He said, "Chad, I've got someone who wants to talk to ya." And I'm like, "Who is it?" "Uh, it's Ozzy Osbourne." And he hands the phone over, and it's really Ozzy! I hear this mumbling for a second, "Er, er, er...," and then he goes, "Chad, your song, it's fucking good! It's fucking *rock and roll*, man!" [*laughs*] I was totally floored! That was like the best thing ever. ■

something like that sets us back several decades, man. But it also pushes us that much closer forward towards a heightened level of civil unrest. And I think that when the numbness and confusion wear off, as far as where you're going to put that amount of rage for that amount of mishandling of human life, it's gonna be a mess.

GWA "Serve Your Soul" makes a nice contrast to that, because it's more of a spiritual song. It seems to suggest that the real answer is to look within—an inner revolution.

HARPER I'm backing that. But it's got to be inner *and* outer revolution. No one is ever just given a time or a culture of sincerity. It always has to be demanded. No one is ever given a better way of life. No one is ever given a culture that has a heightened level of freedom. All those things gotta be demanded.

GWA Is the rhythm guitar on "Serve Your Soul" some kind of tuned-down acoustic? I hear low strings.

HARPER Yes, that's me, playing the J-50 in dropped D. And again, its counterpart is the Tele. I also play an Asher lap steel on the track.

GWA Was the basic track for that extended outro jam section improvised live in the studio?

HARPER The majority of it, yeah. I obviously embellished it, overdubbing another guitar. But my acoustic guitar and the other parts were laid down at once. That song actually closed the whole recording process. So it makes a really fitting ending to the first disc in a lot of ways.

GWA What did you use to record the ballad-type songs on the second disc?

HARPER Those two guitars we've been talking about, the Martin 00-18 and that Fifties Gibson J-50. I miked both up and then decided for each track which one fit better with my voice and the overall song. On "Waiting for You," for instance, I used the Martin, while I played the Gibson on "Never Leave Lonely Alone." I should add that the J-50 had older strings on it at the session, and the Martin was freshly strung. That fact also helped determine which guitar I used on a given song.

GWA That's interesting—something you don't often hear.

HARPER Yeah. I think the biggest mistake a player can make is to change strings in mid-session. If you've been using older strings, stay with 'em, because that has given the guitar a personality and character you can never retrieve if you change the strings. This is the first record where I absolutely committed to that.

GWA Your fingerpicking on "Morning Yearning"—actually, on many songs throughout your career—is both melodic and heavy on the alternating bass. Where did you pick up that style?

HARPER All my fingerstyle techniques are based on the playing of Mississippi John Hurt and Taj Mahal. You could set the second hand of your watch to Taj's thumb. Not that I ever pick up a guitar and say, "Today I want to sound like John, or like Taj." But those two, and also Elizabeth Cotten, were my earliest fingerpicking influences.

GWA Playing with Taj, you no doubt got to observe his fingerstyle technique firsthand.

HARPER Did I ever! And at a young age, too, when I was still putting everything together. When I got the call to play with Taj, I was really just starting to figure out where I wanted to go musically. I had immersed myself in the older generation of guys: Son House, Skip James, the Johnsons—Robert and Lonnie—Blind Willie McTell. But actually being able to go and play with Taj and Ry Cooder and David Lindley—they're the source for this generation. To have lived and been that close to legends like that, it fucked me up, really. [*laughs*]

GWA And you also played with Brownie McGhee, who kind of bridges the gap between the early country bluesmen and later greats like Cooder and Lindley.

HARPER I just wish I could have done more publicly with Brownie. He knew my family from our music store. In the Fifties my parents had a coffeehouse in connection with the store, and Brownie and his playing partner [blues harpist] Sonny Terry would appear there when they came through town. After their performances, my grandma would cook dinner for them and they'd stay at my grandparents' house. Much later on, when I started getting informed by blues at the highest level, it was all about Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee for me. And my grandmother told me, "Well, we're friends of Brownie. Why don't you give him a call?" I dusted off my grandparents' Rolodex, and there he was. I thought, "This number is never gonna work." When I dialed it, he answered with something wonderful like, "It's a great day to be alive. This is Brownie McGhee!" I told him who I was and he says, "Man, your parents had the best grapefruits—like bowling balls!" I was like, "Yeah, that grapefruit tree is still in the backyard." He says, "Why don't you come up and bring me some of those grapefruits?" So I went up and hung out with him. He wasn't playing guitar much anymore, but was into the piano. I brought a few guitars and I'd slide around him while he played piano in his house, and then we'd go sit outside in his garage and eat candy.

GWA Speaking of sweet things, did you write "Sweet Nothing Serenade" specifically as a showcase for the Weissenborn?

HARPER It was an instrumental from the beginning. But I wasn't sure if I was going to do it on electric or acoustic slide. If I was going to go electric, I was going to take a treble-rolled-off, jazz slide approach. And if it was going to be acoustic, I wasn't sure if it would be a resonator instrument or a Weissenborn. So I guess the answer is no, I didn't say, "This is going to showcase this particular instrument." I tried all three, and the Weissenborn stuck its hand up the highest.

GWA How is it that [producer] Danny Kalb played the acoustic guitar parts on "More Than Sorry?"

HARPER Because it's Danny's music, really. I had different music for that lyric, and just as I was going to record it I heard Danny picking something over in the corner. I said, "Hey, what's that?" and he said, "Oh, it's something I've been working on awhile." And I said, "Hmmmm, let's lay that down." I sang the lyrics I had over what he played, we made a few adjustments, and it was there. Then I suggested we add another guitar part in the chorus, and since he played the first guitar, it just made sense for him to do that one, too.

GWA It's got a really different tone from the other acoustic guitars on the album, and it stands out nicely.

HARPER Yeah, the whole thing is played on a nylon-string that's tuned down a whole step, to D G C F A D. Then the lift in the chorus is played on the Gibson J-50, also tuned down a whole step.

GWA By the way, that isn't Danny Kalb of the Blues Project, is it?

HARPER It's not. I know I'm going to be asked that question a lot.

GWA So, is "Happy Everafter in Your Eyes" meant to be the joyous ending of this album of inner and outer strife?

HARPER It ends up leaning that way. I wanted the record to go out on a positive note. In a way, my north, south, east and west all fell into place with the tune sequence—there was no better way to start the first disc than with "Better Way" and no better way to end than with "Serve Your Soul." And there was no way the second disc couldn't start with "Morning Yearning" and end with "Happy Everafter in Your Eyes." They wouldn't go anywhere else, and I had to have them all in the same body of work. This alone made it a good idea to put out the album as a double record.

GWA And it's nice that the whole thing ends with love.

HARPER Yeah, that's a universal need.■

The Consummate Pro

GENZ BENZ SHEN PRO ACOUSTIC AMPLIFIER

BY EMILE MENASCHÉ

List Price: $1,249
Manufacturer: Genz Benz,
www.genzbenz.com

WHISPER THE WORDS "tube amp" to an otherwise responsible adult electric guitarist, and chances are you'll see him turn into a pile of covetous mush. Unplugged types, on the other hand, are not slaves to the tube thrill, and so acoustic guitar amp manufacturers generally opt for the lighter weight and cleaner sound of solid-state circuits.

There are, however, hybrid acoustic amps that rely both on tube and solid-state circuits, and one very fine one indeed is the Genz Benz Shen Pro, a new entry in the company's Shenandoah line of amplifiers. This is one versatile box that allows for a range of great tones, and much of the credit goes to the tube circuit. Once I had a basic sound I liked, I was able to elicit many colors from the guitar by changing my attack, switching from fingers to pick, for example, or by varying the dynamics. With some acoustic guitar amps, such change requires you to reset the controls, but not the Benz; it responded well to every nuance of my playing.

The Shenandoah Acoustic Pro features two channels, each of which pumps 100 watts into 4 ohms (70 into 8 ohms). The closed-back cabinet houses a custom-designed, 12-inch Neodymium cast-frame loudspeaker (rated at 300 watts RMS) and a compression bullet tweeter. The tweeter can be set at full, off, or a less bright -6dB setting (my favorite), a collection of options that makes the Benz as effective with more "electric"-sounding guitars—e.g. magnetic pickup-equipped archtops (tweeter off)—as it is with standard roundhole flat-tops (tweeter on).

The Shenandoah's crowning glory is its preamp configuration. The amp actually boasts two preamps per channel: one with a solid-state FET circuit, the other with a 12AX7 tube. Both branches of the preamp are active and available at the same time, and there is a rotary control that allows you to balance the two.

The tube side generates a tone as thick as hot fudge. Yet it boasts high headroom—it's not there to provide crunch, as it would in an electric guitar amp, but to add warmth and the subtle compression that is the essence of tube magic.

The difference between tube and FET is not that one is "warm" while the other is "cold"; far from being sterile, the solid-state circuit sounds tight, articulate and punchy. With the bend set at about 50/50, the tone is dramatic, big and full, yet with plenty of detail, with awe-inspiring low end. But setting the sound at full tube can also be effective, especially for jazz applications, while a greater tilt towards the FET is good if you need to cut through the mix without dominating the midrange.

The front panel could not be better organized. Each channel has an identical layout that includes unbalanced 1/4-inch and balanced XLR inputs; a phase-reverse switch; gain; a mix control for the tube and FET preamps; three-band EQ; and effects send.

The EQ—low (ffl15dB shelving at 85Hz); mid (ffl12dB peaking at 250Hz–5kHz); and high (ffl12dB shelving at 8kHz)—is easy to use and ably covers the acoustic guitar's broad sonic territory. When the tweeter is on its higher setting, the highs can be dominant and the sound can get hissy, so it's nice to be able to dial them back without causing the guitar to sound muffled.

The onboard 24-bit digital effects are provided by Alesis, and include that manufacturer's usual range of reverbs, modulation effects (chorus, flanger, etc.) and delay. Frankly, the first plate reverb was so appropriate for the acoustic guitar that I felt little need to change it. Both channels receive the same effect, and there's no footswitch for toggling effects settings. You can also add an outboard processor through the effects loop.

The Shenandoah delivers mono sound, but you can run it as a true stereo amp by adding an extension cabinet. The back panel boasts an impressive range of external connections. Along with the aforementioned effects loop, there are three sets of outputs (channel 1, channel 2 and a combination of both), all with balanced XLR and unbalanced 1/4-inch connections and three speaker outs for connecting various cabinets. A set of aux inputs let you blend an external source such as a CD player. The onboard fan can be turned off when your environment demands greater quiet.

Sturdy, attractive, well-designed—all these describe the Shenandoah Pro. But the unit's greatest quality is the tone it produces. It is simply one of the best-sounding acoustic guitar amps in its price range.■

Grand Slam

TAYLOR GS SERIES ACOUSTIC GUITARS BY CHRIS GILL

DESIGNING AN ACOUSTIC guitar is like carrying an infant on a highwire: both are precarious balancing acts. Most small-body guitars deliver sweet midrange and full, rich treble, but bass and volume output are often lacking. Conversely, a big, deep guitar usually pumps out huge bass and considerable volume, but the midrange can often sound pinched while the treble is tiny and tinny, with both lost in the monstrous oomph delivered by the bass strings.

While you'd think that a medium-sized guitar would be just right, that ain't always the case, Goldilocks. Instead, medium guitars often represent an imperfect compromise, providing sufficient but not particularly powerful bass and treble notes that can still sound plinky and brittle.

The challenge of designing an acoustic guitar with truly well-balanced tone has consumed Bob Taylor ever since he launched Taylor Guitars more than three decades ago. Now it looks as though Bob has hit paydirt: the guitars in the company's Grand Symphony (GS) Series may be the closest he and his people have come to producing an acoustic with a jumbo's volume, a dreadnought's tight, commanding bass and a small guitar's sweet midrange and treble. While Taylor's T5 thinline guitar has garnered many well-deserving headlines for the company lately, the GS Series demonstrates that Taylor is still very much active in the realm of traditional acoustics.

So how did Bob and Co. do it? Crucial to the development of the GS Series, says Taylor, was his and senior designer Larry Breedlove's decision to use the firm's highly-regarded 1994 20th Anniversary Grand Auditorium model "as a sort of inspiration" for the series. Breedlove then went to work, developing a new body shape that featured a more voluptuous lower bout and a higher, wider waist than the Grand Auditorium's. This helped make the sound more powerful, increasing volume output while maintaining exceptional midrange and treble definition. Breedlove says that this unique new shape is what truly sets the GS apart from other guitars on the scene.

The Grand Symphony Series consists of four models that are identical except for the tonewood combinations employed in their backs and sides. The four top/back and sides combos are, respectively: sitka spruce/Indian rosewood; sitka spruce/big leaf maple; Western red cedar/Indian rosewood; and Western red cedar/tropical American mahogany. All four models share the same dimensions and features, which include a 20-fret mahogany neck that joins the body at the 14th fret, gold Taylor tuners, ivoroid body and fretboard binding, a nut and saddle crafted from synthetic Tusq material, an understated, elegant three-ring abalone rosette and small abalone dot fingerboard inlays. The guitars' bodies are coated with a high-gloss finish, while the necks feature a smooth, satin finish.

The appointments on these guitars are a bit understated, for a reason: Taylor wants potential customers to focus on their tone. More importantly, the decision to go easy on the adornments helps keep the price of the GS models reasonable. The guitars all list for $2,698, except for the mahogany back and sides model, which costs $2,598.

If you've ever wondered how various woods help determine a guitar's tone, the various guitars in the GS Series will provide you with a great learning experience. More importantly, they give you a sense of which combination of woods is ideal for your playing style. My favorite is the spruce top/rosewood back and sides model, which delivers mellow mids and a smooth high end. The spruce-top models sound brighter and are better suited to handling vigorously strummed chords without breaking up, while the maple-back model sounding brightest of all. The cedar/mahogany guitar, on the other hand, has an exceptionally warm and sweet tone that gives it a nice vintage vibe.

All four models are loud without

List Price: $2,698 (Mahogany Cedar model only, $2,598)
Manufacturer: Taylor Guitars, www.taylorguitars.com

sounding boorish, offering percussive, piano-like bass with tight, metallic definition. Overall, the GS tone is crystal clear—with their boomy, reverberant overtones, these guitars sing like conservatory-trained birds.

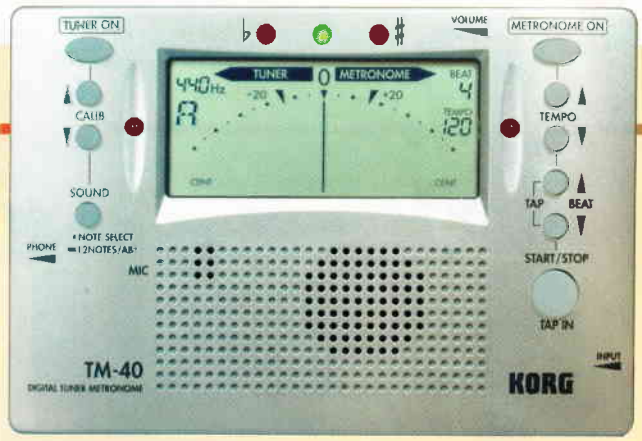
Each GS features a 25 1/2-inch scale and 1 3/4-inch neck width at the nut that make it easy to quickly and cleanly fret single note lines and chords. I do have one minor complaint, and that concerns the placement of a strap pin on the treble side of the neck heel, which makes it uncomfortable to play around the 12th position and up.

There is a built-in Expression System electronics option available for the GS, but those looking for a cutaway are going to have to wait a while; at this time, Taylor views the GS guitars as an expression of their commitment to create a superior new line of traditional acoustics. Of course, the company's catalogue is filled with cool and innovative acoustic-electric models with cutaways for those so inclined.

Taylor's Grand Symphony guitars are well named in every respect. Bob Taylor and his crew understand that there is a large market for handcrafted, traditional guitars with a refined, balanced tone—at a reasonable price. The fact that you can not only pick up a guitar this fine at your local retailer but also compare and choose the tonewood combination that is best suited to your style makes the GS Series a remarkable achievement. The Grand Symphony will certainly have acoustic players of all persuasions shouting "bravo!" ■

New & Notable

ALFRED PUBLISHING
Eagles: Lyric Songbook
Learn to play and sing 28 songs by the Eagles with this simple-to-use lyric and guitar chord book. Songs include "After the Thrill Is Gone," "Best of My Love," "Desperado," "Doolin-Dalton," "Get Over It," "Heartache Tonight," "Hotel California," "Last Resort," "Life in the Fast Lane," "The Long Run," "Love Will Keep Us Alive," "Lyin' Eyes," "New Kid in Town," "One of These Nights," "Peaceful Easy Feeling," "Take It Easy," "Take It to the Limit," "Tequila Sunrise," "Victim of Love," "Witchy Woman" and many more.
List Price: $12.95
Manufacturer: Alfred Publishing, alfred.com



KORG
TM-40 Digital Tuner/Metronome
Designed as a practice tool for guitar and wind, string, keyboard and other instruments, this multi-function digital tuner and metronome allows players to use its main functions simultaneously or independently. The TM-40 features a wide detection range of C1 (32.70 Hz) to C8 (4186.01 Hz) and calibration is adjustable within a range of 410 to 480 Hz (in 1 Hz steps) to accommodate a variety of tuning standards. A built-in, high-sensitivity microphone makes tuning acoustic instruments easy and enhances accuracy. The multi-function digital metronome features an adjustable tempo range of 40 to 208 beats per minute (BPM) that can be set to increase or decrease in single or multiple steps. Beat mode offers preset tempos and time signatures while Tap mode enables users to specify their own tempos. The unit's built-in speaker, with adjustable volume can meet the needs of any playing situation, from private practice in a small room to sessions in a large studio. Memory backup remembers tempo, beat, calibration and reference pitch settings when the power is turned off, while an Auto-Off function shuts down the unit after 20 minutes of non-use.
List Price: $40
Manufacturer: Korg, korg.com

GODIN GUITARS
ACS Nylon Special Edition Light Burst Quilted Leaftop
The virtually feedback-free ACS Nylon Special Edition features a chambered maple solid body design and is equipped with RMC electronics with 13-pin output, making it possible to connect to a multitude of 13-pin devices such as the Roland GR series synths and computers (via MIDI). The guitar's neck is constructed of mahogany and features an Ergocut ebony fingerboard for a comfortable, worn-in feel. Includes a gig bag.
List Price: $1,255
Manufacturer: Godin Guitars, godinguitars.com

HUMICASE
HumiCase Metro
Designed to be compact yet sturdy, the sleek, modern-looking HumiCase Metro has a strong fiberglass shell enhanced by self-humidifying technology. Features include a velour-padded interior with accessory compartment, durable, locking latches reinforced with back-plates, perfect weather seal and an adjustable shoulder strap. The Metro is available in red, black, silver, white, green and blue.
List Price: $269
Manufacturer: HumiCase c/o Tornavoz Music, tornavozmusic.com

Southern Belle

SANTA CRUZ GUITAR COMPANY CUSTOM VINTAGE SOUTHERNER

BY CHRIS GILL

MORE THAN HALF of the guitars produced by the Santa Cruz Guitar Company are custom-built to purchasers' specifications, but every year Santa Cruz president Richard Hoover and his team of craftsmen create a handful of one-of-a-kind instruments for sale and display at the annual winter NAMM convention in Anaheim, California, where music merchandisers gather to showcase their newest products. Among this year's gems was this stunning custom version of Santa Cruz's highly regarded Vintage Southerner model, itself based on the slope-shouldered Gibson guitars of the 1940's.

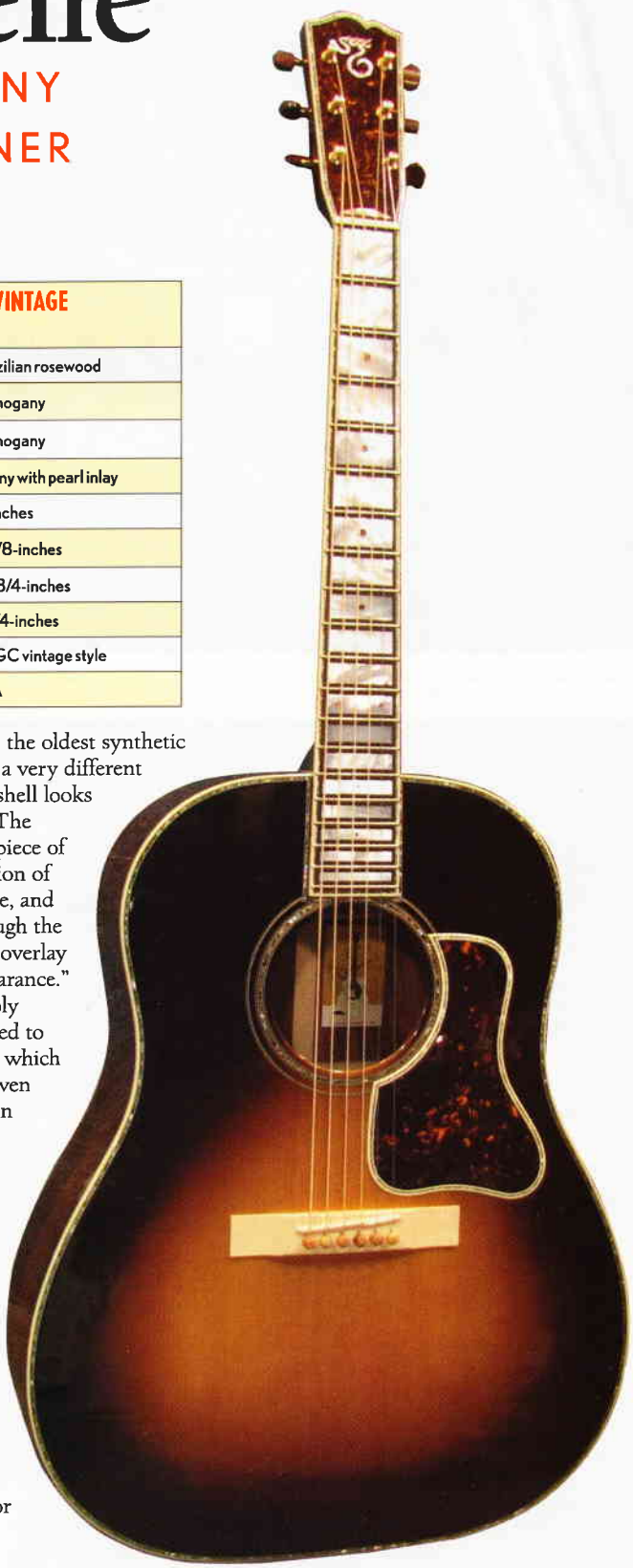
"Several elements of this guitar's construction are custom options that we regularly offer, but many features are unique and won't be repeated," says Hoover. "Many of the materials are extremely rare: the bridge, for example, is made of mammoth ivory from Siberia; the bridge pins are fossilized walrus; and the Brazilian rosewood back and sides were cut from the tree 65 years ago. The mahogany used for the top came from a standing tree that had been dead for more than 50 years. The locals called it the 'gray ghost' because the wood was velvety silver. It was in the way of a road that was being put in, so it had to come down."

Hoover assures environmentally sensitive customers that no living creatures were harmed in the construction of this instrument, though he points out that "dead" materials were used for tonal as much as for ethical reasons: "The reason older guitars sound better than new ones is because the wood cures in the guitar. We cheated with this one by starting with old wood."

Another distinctive feature of this guitar is its celluloid-crafted tortoiseshell headstock overlay. "If you look closely at the imitation tortoiseshell made these days, you see the pixels in it," says Hoover. "We used celluloid, which is the oldest synthetic material, because it has a very different look. Even real tortoiseshell looks fake compared to this. The overlay is inlaid into a piece of ivoroid to give the illusion of binding around the edge, and the ivoroid shows through the amber parts to give the overlay an incredibly rich appearance."

Speaking of incredibly rich, that's what you need to be to afford this beauty, which was priced at $30,000. Even so, the guitar sold within minutes of the NAMM show's opening. If you love the general vibe of this instrument but can live without the "absurdly" rare materials and decorative binding and inlays, you can pick up a standard-issue Vintage Southerner from a dealer or directly from Santa Cruz (santacruzguitar.com) for approximately $3,500. ■

SANTA CRUZ CUSTOM VINTAGE SOUTHERNER SPECS	
BODY	Brazilian rosewood
TOP	Mahogany
NECK	Mahogany
FINGERBOARD	Ebony with pearl inlay
BODY WIDTH	16 inches
BODY DEPTH	4 5/8-inches
SCALE LENGTH	24 3/4-inches
NUT WIDTH	1 3/4-inches
TUNERS	SCGC vintage style
LIST PRICE	N/A



Photograph by CHRIS GILL